



B Corp Impact Report 2024-25

Human. Evolution.

A story of imperfection, progress, and the courage to be authentic

Certified



Corporation

Contents

The story begins here	Page 3
Foreword	Page 4
The business summary	Page 10
The story the numbers tell	Page 14
The conversation continues	Page 16
Partnership as practice	Page 17
B Corp Manifesto Pledges	Page 19
Cross-cutting accountability themes	Page 24
Looking forward	Page 24
Contact us	Page 27

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THE STORY BEGINS HERE

We're by no means perfect, and we're comfortable with that.

This isn't just our tagline - it's our truth. And in a world obsessed with polished presentations and manufactured perfection, that truth has become our greatest strength.

This is our very first Impact Report as a B Corp Certified Company, yes, it's a requirement that we write this, and that we publish it for all to see, but I'm delighted that we have and can. Anyone who works with us, for us, our friends, colleagues and clients should recognise us here. If you're reading this and you don't know us, and you like what you see, also give us a call.

When our founder Norman Kerfoot set up the business in 1993, we began supporting individuals, teams, projects, and organisations to do more and achieve better outcomes. Thirty-two years later, he couldn't have imagined we'd be writing an impact report as a certified sustainable and ethical business. But the seeds of what we've become were planted in that first commitment to "do more and do better."

Today, with a B Corp score of 88.5 - significantly above the UK average of 50.9 - we're not celebrating arrival at some destination. We're celebrating the courage to keep moving, keep questioning, keep evolving. Because as we've learned, the moment you think you've got it all figured out is the moment you stop growing.

This report tells the story of who we are when nobody's watching. It's about the conversations that happen in our team calls, the decisions we make when no one will know the difference, and the

way we've chosen to build a business that matters - not just to us, but to everyone whose lives we touch.





Foreword

When I joined Advance in 2017 the seminal reference point for our work was one of our first projects in the early 90s, the BP Andrew Oilfield. Back then, the conversation was about extraction, about getting the most out of what lay beneath the ocean floor. Today, I find myself advocating for Scottish rewilding, keen to explore opportunities to support Biodiversity Net Gain and think about giving back to the land that we've taken. That evolution - from extraction to regeneration - mirrors our entire business journey.



When people ask me why B Corp matters to us, I don't talk about scores or certifications. I talk about my son and daughter. I talk about the world we're leaving behind and the responsibility we have to ensure it's better than the one we inherited. That's not corporate speak – it's what I believe.

The B Corp process forced us to look in the mirror. We set out on the journey in 2023, committing to a submission for accreditation

in December 2023, which we achieved. But the real journey started long before that application. It started every time we chose transparency over convenience, every time we chose long-term relationships over short-term profit, every time we chose to listen first instead of assuming we knew the answer.

Our partnership with Ecologi began as a practical response to our carbon footprint. But like everything meaningful in our business, it evolved into something deeper. When I see the projects we're supporting - communities in developing economies gaining access to clean energy, degraded landscapes being restored - I see the multiplier effect of choosing partners who share our values.

Scottish rewilding has become a personal passion because it represents everything we believe about business: that the most sustainable solutions require patience, collaboration, localisation and the courage to think in decades rather than quarters. When I discuss opportunities for Biodiversity Net Gain, I'm not pushing an agenda - I'm sharing a conviction that our infrastructure projects can – indeed **MUST** - enhance rather than diminish the natural world.

The years ahead brings new challenges as B Corp standards evolve. Rather than viewing this as disruption, I see it as validation. The movement is maturing, becoming more rigorous, demanding more authentic commitment. That excites me because it means the companies still standing in five years will be the ones truly committed to using business as a force for good. We intend to be there.

Al Simmonite, Managing Director



DEIRDRE'S PERSPECTIVE: GOVERNANCE AS RELATIONSHIP

Non-Executive Director Deirdre Fox on authentic leadership

Watching Advance's B Corp journey from the board level has taught me something profound about the difference between compliance and culture. I've sat on many boards where governance and compliance feel like necessary burdens, where directors tick boxes and move on to keep others happy but not to add value or grow. At Advance, governance is about relationships.

When we implemented new governance frameworks for B Corp, nothing felt forced or artificial. We weren't retrofitting values onto existing practices - we were simply formalising the transparent, collaborative approach that already characterised how AI and the team operated. The board meetings I attend feel more like conversations between colleagues who happen to care deeply about doing the right thing and have no fear of challenge.

What impressed me most about the certification process wasn't the score we achieved, but the questions the team asked along the way. Instead of "How do we get certified?" they asked "How do we use the certification process to make us stronger?" That distinction matters because it reflects an understanding that the real value isn't in the badge - it's in the transformation the process demands.

The governance changes we made weren't about creating new layers of bureaucracy. They were about ensuring that the values-driven decision-making that happens naturally when it's just AI and the core team continues to happen as we grow. How do you scale authenticity? How do you systematise care? These are the questions that keep me engaged as a Non-Executive Director, and they're the questions I believe will define successful businesses in the decade ahead.



ALEXANDER'S JOURNEY: VALUES ACROSS BORDERS

Director Alexander Shakespeare on international expansion in Canada

Taking Advance's approach, style and ethos to Canada has been an exploration based on an established baseline. The essence of what we do and how we do it had to remain intact even as we adapted and responded to the environment. Canadian clients responded to our authenticity as much as experience.

They also wanted and expected to see it demonstrated in ways that made sense within their culture, history and way of working.

B Corp certification was not about developing opportunities; it was more of means to supporting our ability to demonstrate and communicate our ethos, culture and mindset. All our clients were delivering complex infrastructure projects that would have a direct impact on the social economic growth, prosperity and sustainability of communities.

I noted a positive response and reaction from clients who clearly value partners that can demonstrate a measurable commitment to social and environmental outcomes. Our 88.5 score is clearly more than a number; it is a tangible way of evidencing of our character.

For me a benefit of business expansion with B Corp principles has been working with others who have awareness, insights or are themselves certified. While our organisations may be different in style, scope or scale; there was a clear alignment of perspective, values and thinking. In delivery terms, this has enabled us to

accelerate our ability to form business relationships that clearly go far beyond the cost ratio benefit analysis.

There are both similarities and significant difference with the work, projects and engagements we have with clients in Canada compared to the UK. What B Corp does is to reinforce our message, our way of working and what is important. It is an underlying commitment that remains constant and ensures we remain Advance. A firm basis to operate from and offer certainty while also looking to challenge, explore and un-learn.

THE HEARTS OF THE OPERATION

CASSIE'S STORY: FROM NUMBERS TO NARRATIVE

Finance and Sustainability Manager Cassie Kirk on leading the certification journey



People often assume that, as Finance and Sustainability Manager, I approached B Corp certification like a spreadsheet - tick the boxes, hit the score, job done.

But it wasn't like that, it was a pretty daunting task to lead our B Corp submission, but after reviewing the assessment it became apparent that what we do here at Advance really aligns with the ethos of the B Corp mission.



Our only problem was that we, as a small company, needed to put what we as a team have always done subconsciously, down on paper.

With a submission of just over 90 it showed that a lot of what we were doing already, without even thinking, was more than good enough. Turns out, doing the right thing instinctively often puts you ahead of the curve!

Going on maternity leave during the verification process initially felt like terrible timing. We had submitted and I was going to be away for the final part of the puzzle!

Matt had not long joined Advance but was prepared to take on the role in my absence, and I thought it would be a good way of him getting a little more integrated into Advance's processes. It became a powerful test of whether our B Corp practices were embedded in our systems or dependent on individual effort.

Watching Matt seamlessly step in to lead the final stages proved that what we'd built was bigger than any single person - it was culture, not just compliance.

MATT'S LESSON: VERIFICATION AS VALIDATION

Head of Delivery Matt Hemmings on carrying the certification forward

Taking over B Corp verification while Cassie was on maternity leave felt like being handed the keys to the family car - an honour, a responsibility, and a slight terror all at once. In going through the robust B Lab verification process we lost a few points, but these

gave us something to aim at for our Year 1 impact report, and we were certified in June at a score of 88.5.

Those few points we lost during verification weren't failures - they were opportunities. They showed us exactly where our aspirations exceeded our current reality, giving us areas for improvement.

More importantly, they proved that the process had integrity. If we could game the system, the certification wouldn't mean anything.

What struck me most was how naturally our team responded to the verification questions. No one had to rehearse answers or consult policy documents. The responses came from lived experience, from daily practices, from embedded values. That's when I knew we weren't just getting certified - we were being recognised for who we already were.





KAREN'S REALITY: OPERATIONS AS IMPACT

Business Operations Manager and Social Value Lead Karen Duckworth on daily choices

As Business Operations Manager and Social Value Lead, I see how B Corp principles play out in the mundane decisions that most people never think about. Supplier selection, expense policies, office equipment choices - every operational decision is an opportunity to align with our values or drift away from them.

The beauty of B Corp is that it makes visible the connection between small choices and big impact. When I choose suppliers, I'm not just comparing prices and quality - I'm asking about their employment practices, their environmental policies, their community impact.

People sometimes ask how being B Corp certified changes the way we work. The honest answer is that it doesn't change how we work, it validates how we've always worked and gives us language to explain why. When a potential client asks about our approach to social value, I don't have to scramble for examples or create case studies. I can simply describe what we do every day.



The most rewarding aspect of my role is seeing how operational excellence and social impact reinforce each other. Our commitment to fair supplier relationships reduces turnover and improves quality. Our focus on employee wellbeing increases productivity and reduces recruitment costs. Our environmental consciousness often identifies efficiency opportunities. Doing good isn't separate from doing well - it's how we do well.

GEOFF'S ARRIVAL: JOINING A MOVEMENT

Recently joined consultant Geoff Rayner on discovering B Corp culture

To be perfectly frank, before joining Advance, I never actually really knew what a certified B Corp company was. I'd come from a background that was very much profit and growth at all costs, and ironically, coming from the finance world, I was very well accustomed with impact investing and ESG investing.

Equally as interesting, I was also very well accustomed with the phrase "greenwashing." My reflection on my time in the finance industry was that there was a lot of greenwashing happening, and I wasn't entirely sure that all the impact and ESG investors were true to those labels and practices. I got more of a sense it was flavour of the month.



Stepping into Advance has been a breath of fresh air relative to the world that I was previously in. What I can sense so far is that these are not just empty words. There is a real sense of intention in everything that's done.



What makes this experience particularly meaningful is that I can finally live by two values that are exceptionally important to me: freedom and integrity. At Advance, I'm given the freedom to operate with purpose, and I can see that the business genuinely operates with integrity - values that I couldn't always express in my previous role.

I'm really excited to see what else is to come from working within a B Corp organisation. It's refreshing to be part of a company where values aren't just painted on walls but are lived and breathed in daily decision making.



A Year of Growth, Learning, and Authentic Impact – The Business Summary

By Al Simmonite, Managing Director

When we received our B Corp certification in June 2024, scoring 88.5, I wondered if anything would fundamentally change about how we operate. The answer, twelve months later, is both nothing and everything. Nothing changed because our values and approach remained exactly the same (as they have done since we formed as a business in 1993). Everything changed because having that external validation gave us - and our clients - the confidence to lean even further into who we've always been.

The Market Context: Infrastructure in Transition

The past year has been fascinating for our sector. With the UK mired in pre and post-election stasis in many infra sectors, we have seen a shift towards private sector funded projects. A shift away from “traditional” infrastructure (road, rail, nuclear power gen) to “new” sectors that bring fascinating opportunities and challenges. We are now seeing the trade press focus on data centres, battery gigafactories, grid transition and interconnectors as well as the ongoing pressure to create new renewable sources onshore and offshore. Our task here at Advance is to adapt, evolve and keep ourselves relevant and adding value as the market shifts. It's been a challenging year in that respect, major procurements keep slipping, clients can't keep teams mobilised forever and market requirements and priorities in our clients have to also adapt. But we are keeping engaged and laying positive foundations for long term relationships and creating momentum in new areas such as

partnering (with other SMEs and with larger organisations who recognise the value in our agile, tailored capability and approach).

In the UK market, the integration of Biodiversity Net Gain requirements into major projects has still only barely shifted the dial, but the optimist in me says it's a start and early days (despite the climate crisis clock ticking away loudly in our ears!). Rather than seeing BNG as regulatory burden, clients should be discovering the opportunity – a generational opportunity to create projects that genuinely enhance rather than merely minimise harm to natural systems. Scotland's Railway, for example, have taken this on overtly, with their commitment to reducing inequalities and taking climate action becoming operational reality rather than aspirational statement.

Our Canada expansion under Alexander Shakespeare's leadership has revealed similar patterns, though with distinctly Canadian characteristics. In Canada, we have begun to understand the imperative to respect the First Nation peoples whilst also becoming more local ourselves with the formation of Advance Consultancy (Canada) Inc earlier in 2025.

The cultural differences in how environmental and social considerations integrate into project planning have been illuminating, but the underlying hunger for more authentic, impact-driven approaches appears universal.



Work Delivered: Putting Values into Practice

What strikes me most about reviewing our project work this year is how naturally our B Corp principles have woven themselves into everything we do. We didn't create separate "B Corp services" or develop new consulting methodologies. Instead, our existing approach - starting with listening, focusing on sustainable outcomes, building psychological safety - became more intentional and systematic.

Our Major Projects Association membership has provided particularly rich opportunities to demonstrate B Corp thinking in practice. Working alongside fellow B Corp members Moorhouse Consulting and The Oakland Group, we formed the "Projects with Purpose" MPA sub-group and jointly led a MPA Fringe event on what B Corp is all about for the major projects sector. We have shown how values-driven approaches can influence whole industry conversations rather than just individual project outcomes.

Our pro-bono work, while still developing systematically, has created some of our most rewarding partnerships. We are proud to have become a corporate partner to the Community Rail Network in January this year, following in the footsteps of two close friends, SLC Rail and BA Events. These relationships have reminded us why we pursued B Corp certification in the first place - not for the badge, but for the framework it provides to formalise our commitment to using business as a force for good.

The Development Journey: Growing Without Losing Ourselves

Perhaps the most significant development this year hasn't been any single project or client relationship, but rather the internal

evolution of how we think about growth. When Cassie Kirk led our initial B Corp certification while managing new motherhood, when Matt Hemmings stepped seamlessly into verification leadership, when Karen Duckworth systematically integrated B Corp principles into daily operations - these moments revealed that our culture isn't dependent on individual heroics. It's embedded in our systems and relationships.

The recruitment of Geoff Rayner in July 2025 became the ultimate test of this cultural resilience. Already known to us as an Associate, Geoff joins the core team to develop delivery and account management capacity and capability to further enable our evolution as a business in the UK, in Canada, and further internationally. Watching someone new discover and contribute to our culture has been both validating and educational. Geoff's perspective on joining an established B Corp organisation has helped us understand which aspects of our approach translate naturally and which require more intentional communication and development.

As ever, our Associate team remains critical to our ability to deliver differently, at scale and in the agile way that has hallmarked Advance for 32 years. We have been delighted to welcome several new faces to the team in the last year, and we hope that we can finally update the "about us" page on our website with all their details. I won't name them here as it constantly changes!



The Learning Edge: What Growth Has Taught Us

This year has reinforced something we've always believed but perhaps hadn't fully appreciated: sustainable growth isn't about getting bigger - it's about getting better at being ourselves. Our environmental score of 9.7 hasn't been a source of embarrassment but rather a clear indicator of where our next growth lies, as well as being a real fact of life for a service-delivery business of our size and scale. My passion for Scottish rewilding and biodiversity net gain has not yet influenced our service offerings and client conversations as much as I would like, but we're still early in that journey.

As my focus is and remains the UK market, my recap is centred on that. The feedback from clients has been consistently positive, but more importantly, it's been consistently consistent. Whether working with Scotland's Railway on developing individual self-awareness, with Breedon to shape how their leadership team understands and creates impact, with Tony Gee & Partners in continuing the long term journey of leadership capability development, with major consortiums in the Infra market supporting significant wins in Rail (Midlands Rail Hub) and Water (Anglian Water Services Delivery Partner) sectors (to name just a few), the values and approaches clients experience remain authentic expressions of who we are rather than situational adaptations to what we think they want to hear.

For Alexander, leading our Canadian line of business, the year has been almost the exact opposite feel. Whilst the UK market stagnates somewhat (a theme heard consistently in pretty much every conversation over coffee) the Canadian market is

accelerating. We continue to balance remote and hybrid delivery with the added value of working face-to-face with teams in Canada, a situation that inevitably challenges our environmental performance but is still necessary to deliver the value we know we can. Working from Ontario to the West Coast across road, rail (light and heavy), hospital build and others, we have also dipped our toe carefully into the USA market when asked to do so by our Canadian clients. Such is the momentum in Canada, we opened our first subsidiary business in Toronto this year, Advance Consultancy (Canada) Inc. This creates the base for us to further develop as a local business, and further build local capability and capacity, initially through finding aligned Associates to join the team.

Financial Performance: Doing Well by Doing Good

We operate an April to March Financial year, so B Corp Certification and this report spans two FYs. Performance (revenue, margin etc) remain consistent and in line with our long-term development strategy, although with the stagnation in the UK market, having two separate geographies to operate in has supported our long term business resilience and has reinforced the focus in both diversification and internationalisation in our 5 year strategic plan.



What's become clear is that B Corp certification hasn't been a cost centre or marketing expense - it's been a business development and operational efficiency driver. More so, it's become the framework by which we understand the ethos and values of our business and the value we can create for our clients and hence in society. Clients increasingly value partners who can demonstrate measurable commitment to social and environmental outcomes. The certification provides third-party validation of values alignment that translates into stronger, longer-term relationships and more integrated project partnerships.

Looking Forward: The Foundation We've Built

As we prepare for the evolution to B Corp's new seven impact area framework and our 2027 recertification, I'm struck by how naturally our current foundation positions us for these expanded requirements. Our Workers performance (34.9) provides strong foundations for both Fair Work and JEDI development. Our authentic stakeholder engagement supports enhanced Purpose & Stakeholder Governance. Even our environmental growth edge becomes opportunity rather than challenge as Climate Action and Environmental Stewardship become mandatory focus areas.

When we certified in June 2024, we made what we called Manifesto Pledges against the 5 Impact areas. We report on progress against all those later in this report, but they remain extant through to our 2027 recertification as we believe they represent sensible but challenging growth opportunities for us as individuals and as a business.

The business we've become over the past year isn't just B Corp certified - it's B Corp authentic. The difference matters because certification can be achieved through compliance, but authenticity requires integration. We've spent this year proving to ourselves and our stakeholders that our B Corp score reflects who we actually are, not who we aspire to become.

That foundation - authentic, tested, and systematically developed - positions us perfectly for whatever comes next in our evolution as a business committed to using our success as a force for good in the infrastructure and major projects sector.

The conversation continues, the learning continues, and most importantly, the authentic expression of our values in everything we do continues to drive both our impact and our growth.

THE STORY THE NUMBERS TELL

A Different Kind of Scorecard

Based on the B Impact assessment, The Advance Consultancy Limited earned an overall score of 88.5. The median score for ordinary businesses who complete the assessment is currently 50.9. But these numbers are just the beginning of the story.



Workers: 34.9 - This is where our story shines brightest. Not because we've perfected employee relations, but because we've never stopped trying to get better at them. When you read what we do it will be no surprise that we offer all our employees' opportunity to

develop their skills and knowledge with the support and structure they need to succeed because if they succeed, we succeed!

The score reflects something deeper than policies and procedures. It reflects the conversation AI has with each team member about their career aspirations, the way we adjust project assignments to support personal development goals, the reality that professional growth isn't a benefit we offer - it's a partnership we enter.

Governance: 19.7 - Our Governance score reflects our commitment to transparency, but more importantly, it reflects our understanding that good governance is about relationships, not rules. Our approach to Governance promotes those areas that are key to our business: openness and transparency, a business that welcomes everyone and one that is a safe, rewarding place to work, with a clear sense of purpose.

When we make decisions, we don't just ask "Is this legal?" or "Is this profitable?" We ask, "Is this right?" and "Who does this serve?" Those questions change everything about how business gets done.

Community: 19.9 - Our Community impact extends far beyond traditional definitions of corporate social responsibility. We believe in giving back and fostering a sense of unity and growth within our community. We do this through actively seeking out opportunities to support and uplift our community.



Our commitment to supporting Community Rail Network, a partnership entered into since we became certified, exemplifies this. We offer our services to develop teams and culture to support Community Rail's objectives, in a sector that has anchored Advance for over 30 years, and we see being a key part of our sector portfolio in the future even as the industry evolves.

Likewise, our monthly and annual charity contributions are personal to the team, each of us making a nomination for our charitable giving on a rotation basis as well as our major annual company contribution.

Environment: 9.7 - This is our growth edge, our learning frontier. The score accurately reflects where we are, not where we're going. But environment is more than just own footprint, it's about what we can do in our work with clients to highlight how projects support the relevant UN SDGs (particularly 6,7,11,13,14 & 15).

Our Ecologi partnership began as carbon offsetting but has evolved into something more meaningful - a commitment to regenerative impact. When AI talks about Scottish rewilding, he's not discussing a hobby; he's articulating a vision for how infrastructure development can enhance rather than diminish natural systems.

We aim to carry out delivery remotely where practical but for some of our workshops the best outcomes for those attending and the client are where they are carried out in person. For delivery in person, we ensure we use the best methods of transport for example using the train rather than jumping straight to the convenience of the car. For travel that cannot be avoided we

monitor miles by car, train and plane to ensure we use the offset in our Ecologi subscription to cover the CO₂ emissions released.

There is no doubt, our developing business in Canada does give us some challenges here, as we expand our work and increase the projects and clients overseas, whilst we simultaneously stand up and integrate our Canada (Inc) business, our carbon footprint will take a hit. We are monitoring closely and always more than offsetting the impact, but we do recognise offsetting is not the perfect solution nor should be seen as such. We continue to discuss how we can best optimise our delivery across all our geographies, balancing the value-add of our services with their impact on planet and society.

Customers: 4.1 - This score reflects both our reality and our opportunity. In our approach, we feed off our own ethos and values and focus on an authentic and transparent approach to scoping work, being quite clear in what we can do (and do well) and what we can't.

Our client relationships aren't transactional - they're transformational. We don't just deliver services; we build capabilities. We don't just solve problems; we develop problem-solving capacity. That approach takes longer and costs more upfront, but it creates value that compounds over time.

THE CONVERSATION CONTINUES

What Our Clients Really Think

"It's fantastic that another of our SME members has gained B Corp certification. The B Corp Movement is about the championing of business as a force for good – a philosophy that aligns with the values of the Major Projects Association about the beneficial role of major projects for society on a sustainable, inclusive and equitable basis." - Major Projects Association

But the real validation comes in quieter moments - when Scotland's Railway chooses to continue our partnership despite fiscal pressures because they trust our values alignment, when Akerlof reaches



out to explore collaboration because they recognise kindred spirits, when senior leaders in Breedon state we are their first call for any conversation around collaboration and team, when CEOs and senior leaders come to us for challenging mentoring support, when Global CEOs ring our team first with news of a big win before their own colleagues. These personal validations continue to reinforce to us that we have got it right, our approach endures. But we strive to always think better, do more, deliver more, sustain more, evolve ... MORE.

"We are thrilled to congratulate Advance Consultancy on achieving B Corp Certification: a very well-deserved recognition which reflects the values and principles we've experienced firsthand in our collaboration with them." This client testimonial matters not because it validates our certification, but because it confirms that our values aren't just internal aspirations - they're externally visible realities.

The Manifesto Lives

Our 8 Pillars of Ethics weren't created for B Corp certification - they preceded it by years. But the certification process revealed how naturally these principles align with the B Corp framework:

"We will Act as our true selves" threads through every aspect of our governance approach. We don't have a separate "corporate persona" - what you see in our board meetings is what you get in our client work is what you experience in our casual conversations.

"We will Always Evolve" drives our approach to continuous improvement. We are by no means perfect, and we are comfortable with that; to be perfect means we are stationary and not moving. Advance continues to develop, to be constantly aware of the ever-changing communities around us and be a part of that change.

"We will build Better futures" connects directly to our environmental commitments and our vision for infrastructure that enhances rather than depletes natural and social systems.

"We will Listen First" shapes every client interaction. Here at Advance, we want to bring you a different kind of Consultancy, that starts with you talking and us listening.

"We will be Explorers" encapsulates the idea that we keep evolving through curiosity, balancing our credibility and self-belief with an inherent passion for new ideas and thinking, the essence of diversity in action.

"We will be fearless" our mantra of ruthless compassion focuses us on not creating false harmony internally or with our clients. If our clients aren't mature enough to hear the difficult conversation, we can support their capability growth, but it won't stop us saying what we believe needs to be said.

"We will stand on the shoulders of giants" We create our own way of working and thinking, unique to Advance, but we aren't so arrogant to think we know it all. We respect, embrace and challenge equally the work of respected thinkers and doers from Sinek, Edmondson, Hawkins, Clutterbuck, Klein, Brown, Syed and many more.

And last, but definitely not least ...

"We live by SID" Our model of Silent Internal Discussions (SID©) predates all of us currently in the business, an inspired creation by our Founder, Norman Kerfoot. SID inspires us to give permission to ourselves and others to speak freely, to get that nagging voice and doubt out of the back of the head and onto the table and into the conversation. It is a simple but effective tool to facilitate our own psychological safety and a simple idea that has travelled and embedded into our clients over decades.

The pillars weave through everything we do, creating a framework for decision-making that predates B Corp but perfectly aligns with its principles.

PARTNERSHIP AS PRACTICE

The Ecologi Connection

Our partnership with Ecologi began with a simple recognition: as a remote-working and small business, our carbon footprint isn't huge, but we can all do our bit. What started as practical carbon management has evolved into something more profound - a partnership with a fellow B Corp that shares our commitment to authentic impact.

We chose Ecologi because their offsetting projects are about way more than just planting trees, and all their projects globally are Gold Standard certified. But we stayed with Ecologi because working with them feels like working with ourselves - committed to transparency, focused on long-term impact, comfortable with the complexity that comes with doing things right rather than easy.

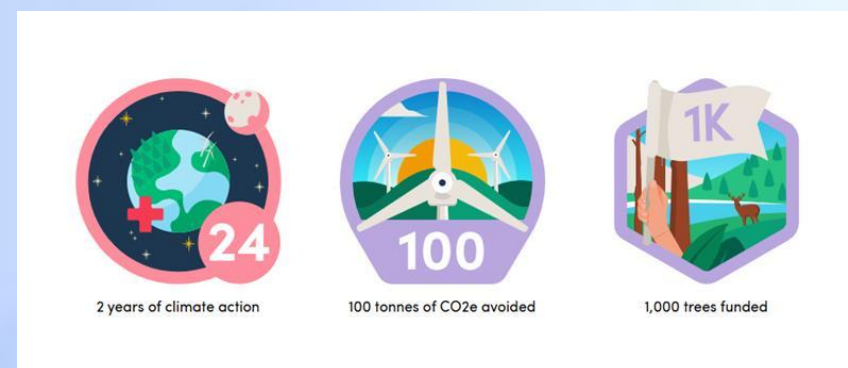
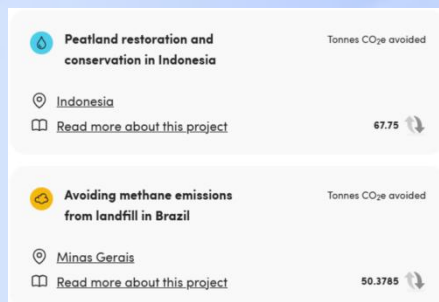


Image: our support to Ecologi so far....

This year our Ecologi subscriptions have supported “Gold Standard” offset projects, these two topping our league table of carbon avoidance.



Al's personal commitment to Scottish rewilding represents the intersection of individual passion and organisational purpose. When he advocates for Biodiversity Net Gain in our client work, he's not pushing an agenda - he's demonstrating how personal values and professional practice can align to create exponential impact.

The Infrastructure Influence

Our work within the Major Projects Association and partnerships with fellow B Corp members Moorhouse Consulting and The Oakland Group represent something larger than professional networking. We're part of a movement to transform how infrastructure gets planned, funded, and delivered.

When infrastructure consultants embrace B Corp principles, the ripple effects extend far beyond our individual companies. We influence procurement policies, we shape project evaluation criteria, we demonstrate that sustainable and profitable aren't opposing concepts. Every major project we touch becomes an opportunity to prove that better outcomes are possible when values drive decisions.

Business in Partnership

Over this last year we have increasingly engaged with other like-minded organisations, some already in the B Corp family (like our friends at Akerlof and at NU Creative) and others inspired to step onto the journey too.

Forming partnerships achieves many goals for both of us as a business, our partners and, ultimately, our clients. We are an SME – in both contexts of the acronym, a Small-to-Medium enterprise and we are Subject Matter Experts. That brings opportunities and challenges. We are inherently limited in capacity, the very thing that contributes to the ethos of our business provides challenge when operating at scale. Partnering helps manage that, by coming together with aligned organisations offering related capabilities but, critically, with aligned mindset, ethos and values, we believe we can really accelerate the delivery of value.

As a founding partner of the SME Alliance, this has proven itself in our recent award as a consortium of a place on Lot 8 of the Crown Commercial Services Management Consultancy Framework 4. Alongside Anturas Consulting, Infracore, MOVAR, FirstCo, CMR, PlanAhead, we have spent this last year establishing ourselves and building our mutual understanding and trust that we believe will allow the Alliance to deliver differently for clients. Our B Corp guiding light on customers, governance and other areas have been a key anchor point for our involvement in these conversations.



B CORP MANIFESTO PLEDGES: ACCOUNTABILITY IN ACTION

"We have set out publicly our future expectations to hold ourselves to account."

When we achieved B Corp certification, we made specific commitments across each of the five impact areas. These weren't generic promises - they were authentic expressions of who we are and who we aspire to become. This section holds us accountable to those pledges, celebrating progress while honestly acknowledging where we still have work to do.

Our manifesto pledges remain valid for at least the next year, as we develop ongoing actions to evolve and improve against each of them. As we move into 2027 and our first B Corp recertification to the new standard of 7 impact areas, we will review and update the pledges to align with the new model.

GOVERNANCE PLEDGES (Score: 19.7)

"Ethics and Values are embedded in our Business Governance"

Our Public Commitments

Pledge 1: *"Annually we will review our Policy Framework to ensure it is delivering the outcomes that we expect both for its employees, associates, partners and customers."*

Pledge 2: *"We will actively seek out ideas which will improve our business for those that work with or for us."*

Pledge 3: *"Our engagement with our customer base will drive our future focus for process improvement so that we can be best in class."*

2025 Performance Assessment


✓ **Achieved - Policy Framework Review:** Completed a comprehensive policy framework review resulting in enhanced governance structures that formalise our commitment to maintaining "the same high company standards that are expected in larger organisations." These included a carbon impact plan and report as well as a newly drafted AI policy aimed at enhancing our business whilst preserving our values.

✓ **Achieved - Idea Integration:** Successfully integrated team ideas during B Corp certification process, with Cassie Kirk leading initial certification and Matt Hemmings seamlessly stepping into verification leadership - demonstrating that our systems genuinely support and implement employee contributions.

We trialled a management system, and while it ultimately didn't suit Advance's specific needs, the process was a valuable exercise that clarified our operational needs and confirmed the importance of implementing either a unified or integrated management solution.

✗ **In Progress - Customer Engagement:** Client testimonials demonstrate strong customer engagement, but we haven't systematised how this feedback drives process improvement priorities. We recognise this is a missed opportunity to further develop our integrated capabilities.

This coming year we challenge ourselves to gather constructive feedback across both our core geographies and understand the transatlantic learning we can apply to our offer.

 **Areas for Development:** While we review policies annually and integrate team ideas naturally, we lack systematic measurement of "outcomes we expect" for each stakeholder group and formal processes for translating customer engagement into process improvement roadmaps.

Success Metrics: 100% of policies reviewed against specific outcome criteria; documented evidence of employee ideas implemented; customer feedback integrated into process improvements.

WORKERS PLEDGES (Score: 34.9)

"We Will Act as our True Selves"


Our Public Commitments

Pledge 1: "To continue to monitor the Advance Employee Benefit and remuneration package against the industry and government standard."

Pledge 2: "Improve investment in training and development opportunities for all staff on an annual basis."

Pledge 3: "Continue to monitor employee satisfaction with regular reviews with all employees encouraging feedback."

2024 Performance Assessment

 **Achieved - Benefits & Remuneration:** We continued to offer above inflation increases whilst also expanding the benefits offer to our core team. Business performance in each FY allowed us to further reward team members. Critically, such conversations are open and transparent across the team. When we explored salary sacrifice options, rather than imposing a benefit no-one wanted, we engaged together on the idea before deciding not to pursue at this time. Some of our team have taken up the benefits of the cycle to work scheme too, supporting also our environment focus. With Cassie returning from maternity leave, we have worked out a staged return to work that suits her needs, childcare requirements and the business.

Our core team have totally embraced the daily health and wellbeing challenges offered through our YuLife benefits package, the tension in the office palpable some days as they compete to lead the team league table in steps walked and sudoku ... and we were delighted to top the YuLife league table for engagement.





✓ **Achieved - Training Investment:** We have successfully supported the development of various members of the team with two directors carrying out training to become accredited GC Index Coaches, another becoming accredited in Team 360 and supporting one of our associates and our new consultant to become DISC accredited so our commitment to the associate base not just our full time workers where possible and relevant to the business needs.

In addition, Matt was nominated to complete the Rising Stars Program with the Major Projects Association a program specific for the future leaders of the industry to develop and attend to grow their network and skills.

We also invested in other members of the team to enhance their Microsoft Office skills whether it was specific to one program or the whole 365 suite.

As we all adapt to the exponential capability growth in AI (as in Artificial Intelligence, not our MD AI (it's very confusing!)) we are also seeking out and investing in appropriate learning for the team, embracing the use of CoPilot as an integral part of our M365 suite and have nominated Karen as AI Champion in the core team with a role to explore, experiment and share ideas and learning in this rapidly developing space.

✓ **Achieved - Employee Satisfaction:** Our 34.9 Workers score (maximum possible) validates that our "fundamentally transparent business" approach and encouragement of "challenge and ideas from all" creates genuine employee satisfaction. Regular "formal but informal development reviews with all core staff allow for open

dialogue on business performance, individual development and future growth. These sessions always create powerful conversations and two-way feedback that is shared widely across the team.

✚ **Continuous Excellence:** Rather than areas for improvement, our challenge is maintaining this performance while scaling our operations across UK and Canada markets.

COMMUNITY PLEDGES (Score: 19.9)

"We will Always Evolve"

Our Public Commitments

Pledge 1: *"We are dedicated to making regular charitable donations."*

Pledge 2: *"We will continue to develop a programme of employee training related to diversity, equity and inclusion."*

Pledge 3: *"We will seek to engage in pro-bono services with charitable organisations and the local community."*

2024 Performance Assessment

✚ **In Progress - Charitable Donations:** In 2024, Advance Consultancy continued its employee-led charitable giving initiative, where team members take turns nominating a charity to receive a monthly donation. This approach fosters personal engagement and broadens the impact across diverse causes. At year-end, the company selects one or two local charities to receive a larger donation, reflecting the annual profit share and reinforcing our commitment to community support.



🔍 Development Needed - DEI Training: In commenting on this I (Al) wonder if I'm being too hard on ourselves by making this a development need. True, in strict terms we have not done any formal DEI training in year. But given our core ethos and how we often challenge each other and openly share ideas and topics of discussion on DEI-related matters, from gender equality to supporting neurodivergence in the workplace, to engaging actively with the Major Projects Association's Inclusion Hub I believe we are on this ... but no doubt we, like so many others, can always strive to do more ... and that's exactly what we aim to do in 25/26.

✅ Achieved - Pro-bono Services: As part of our support to the local community we support Matt Hemmings in his role as an Adult Volunteer and Reserves Officer in the RAF Air Cadets. We see this commitment as a way to contribute to the growth of young adults by supporting Matt's contribution to events and activities not only in Staffordshire but Nationally too where applicable. The Business has allowed Matt to 14 days Reserve Leave in order to participate and support activities for youth development in Staffordshire and the National program of events.

We also provide pro bono development capability to the leadership team at the Community Rail Network for whom we became a Corporate Partner in January 2025.

✅ Foundation Strength: Our community score reflects strong relationship-building and authentic engagement across our "wide network of associates, partners and clients," providing solid foundation for systematic expansion.

ENVIRONMENT PLEDGES (Score: 9.7)

"We Will Build Better Futures"

Our Public Commitments

Pledge 1: *"Strengthening our environmental stewardship policies, including setting targets for energy usage and emissions reduction and business travel."*


Pledge 2: *"Further supporting our employees to manage the environmental impact of home working."*


Pledge 3: *"Speaking louder and more often about our passion for rewilding and biodiversity net gain."*

2024 Performance Assessment

✅ Foundation Established: Our Ecologi partnership (24+ months) makes us "a net carbon positive organisation" through Gold Standard global offsetting projects, providing strong environmental stewardship foundation. We have developed a Carbon Management and Reduction Plan, formally published within the business. Whilst recognising our increased air travel burden to support our growing Canada (Inc) business, we have further increased our offset contributions to Ecologi, remaining overall net carbon positive whilst recognising offsetting is not a long-term solution.



 **Personal Leadership:** Al's authentic passion for Scottish rewilding and biodiversity net gain advocacy has begun influencing client conversations, although we know and believe we can still do more to bring the issues facing the UK environment to the forefront.

 **Amplification Opportunity:** We need and want to "speak louder and more often" about our environmental commitments, transforming personal passion into systematic organisational capability and client value creation.

CUSTOMERS PLEDGES (Score: 4.1)

"We are here to catalyse better outcomes"


Our Public Commitments


Pledge 1: *"We live and breathe the language of inclusion and diversity in our own team and provide meaningful challenge to our clients."*

Pledge 2: *"We listen to what our sponsors want and need and only design solutions that meet that need, being clear where we can add value and where we can't."*

Pledge 3: *"We will continue to expand our network of partners to allow us to share a much wider capability and add even more integrated value."*

2024 Performance Assessment

 **Achieved - Listening and Authentic Scoping:** Client testimonials consistently validate our approach: "All design and pre-delivery work is conducted with one thing in mind: what is best for the client." Our commitment to being "quite clear in what we can do (and do well) and what we can't" creates trusted partnerships.

 **In Progress - Partner Network Expansion:** Successfully expanded network with SME Alliance and further strengthened relationships with like-minded organisations, demonstrating progress on integrated capability development.

 **Challenge and Inclusion Development:** We naturally embody inclusion through our "Listen First" approach and diverse thinking appreciation,

We do "provide meaningful challenge to our clients" on inclusion and diversity topics. Al has personally engaged closely with the MPA's Inclusion Hub, speaking at two MPA events this year to lead the Inclusion Moment. Our insights are also provocative and challenging on the topics of leadership, diversity and inclusion, demonstrating a transparency of our ethos and leadership of this conversation.

But we are not planning to stand still here ... we want to and know we can do more.



CROSS-CUTTING ACCOUNTABILITY THEMES

The Systematic Development Challenge

Across all areas, a consistent pattern emerges: our authentic values and natural relationship-building create strong foundations, but we need to develop more systematic approaches to measurement, documentation, and continuous improvement.

Strengths to Leverage:

- **Workers (34.9):** Our people-first approach provides maximum-score foundation
- **Authentic Relationships:** Client testimonials validate our genuine commitment across all areas
- **Values Integration:** Our 8 Pillars of Ethics create a consistent framework across all pledges and our client work

Development Opportunities:

- **Systematic Measurement:** Converting authentic commitment into documented impact across all areas
- **Process Formalisation:** Creating scalable systems that maintain our personal touch while enabling growth
- **Stakeholder Integration:** Developing feedback loops that systematically inform continuous improvement

Preparing for Seven Impact Areas Evolution

Our current pledges provide strong foundations for B Corp's new seven impact area framework:

Natural Transitions:

- Workers pledges support both Fair Work and JEDI requirements
- Environment pledges align with Climate Action and Environmental Stewardship
- Governance pledges enhance Purpose & Stakeholder Governance

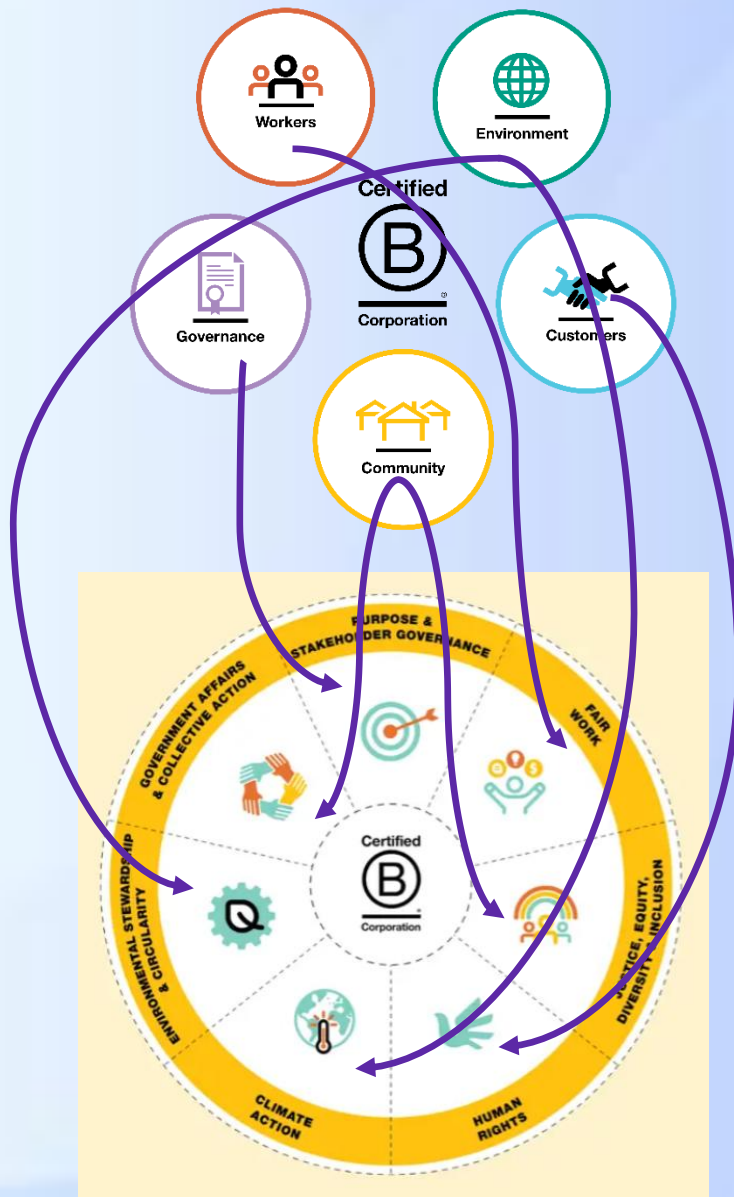
New Development Areas:

- Human Rights framework extending our inclusion commitments
- Government Affairs leveraging our Major Projects Association influence

LOOKING FORWARD: THE EVOLUTION CONTINUES

Preparing for Transformation

The B Corp movement is evolving, and the changes ahead excite rather than concern us. Starting in 2025, certification will shift from the current five-area assessment to seven mandatory impact topics. Instead of accumulating points, companies will need to demonstrate meaningful progress across all areas.



This evolution aligns perfectly with our philosophy: continuous improvement matters more than current achievement. The new framework will require deeper engagement with Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion; expanded environmental stewardship; and enhanced stakeholder governance. These aren't challenges for us - they're invitations to become more fully ourselves.

The 2025 Roadmap

Our commitments for the coming year aren't about compliance - they're about growth. We continue to develop a sound localised business in Canada, to better serve the requirements of that market. We're formalising our JEDI initiatives not because they'll improve our score, but because they'll improve our impact.

Our partnership expansion with Scottish rewilding organisations reflects AI's personal passion becoming organisational purpose. Our enhanced pro-bono commitments grow from our existing community engagement. Our strengthened governance frameworks build on the transparency that already characterises our operations.



The Invitation

This report is more than backward-looking documentation - it's a forward-looking invitation. We're inviting clients to join us in proving that infrastructure projects and other complex delivery projects can enhance natural and social systems. We're inviting peers to collaborate on transforming industry standards. We're inviting stakeholders to hold us accountable for the commitments we're making.



Most importantly, we're inviting ourselves to keep growing, keep questioning, keep evolving. Because the moment we think we've arrived is the moment we stop deserving the trust our clients, partners, and communities have placed in us.

We are by no means perfect, and we are comfortable with that; to be perfect means we are stationary and not moving. So, we'll keep moving - toward deeper impact, broader influence, and more authentic expression of the values that have guided us from the beginning.

This is our story so far. The best chapters are yet to come.

Contact us

Please contact us about any aspect of this document, and about how Advance can help you and your team or organisation adopt better, more effective ways of working:



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The way we work

The Advance Consultancy operates with its clients and people using the following values and behaviours

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Trust

We trust first and deal with the facts of a situation



Openness

We welcome and give feedback for the sake of improvement



Honesty

We are clear about what we are good at and not good at



Challenge

We give and accept challenges to deliver superior performance



Fun

We work to generate a climate in which creativity can thrive

