



# Impact Report

23/24

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# Our Partners

Native Ecology was founded in 2015, with our partner Amy working alone as a sole trader. Nine years on, we are now a flourishing LLP with an award winning team of 13, a proud Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environment Management (CIEEM) Registered Practice and Certified B Corporation! Our journey has been a huge learning experience, throughout which we have taken pride in our contributions to advancing ecological sustainability and delivering impactful solutions, and always prioritised our commitment to protect and restore natural habitats.

Our past year has been marked by significant change and progress. The introduction of mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain via the Environment Act 2021 has been a pivotal shift for the industry. To adapt to this new focus, we invested in extensive training and enhanced our productivity by improving many of our processes. This allowed us to deliver a four-day workweek, something we believe should become standard for all businesses with the technologies available to us today.

Gathering data and information for our first impact report has been an enjoyable but messy process. It has highlighted many potential areas we can improve our understanding of our impacts and our data collection. Looking ahead, we are committed to further developing our impact reporting, ensuring transparency and accountability in our efforts to improve our relationship with stakeholders and contributing to reversing the global crises we face together. We believe in leading by example and will persist in our mission to create a sustainable future.

Thanks for reading our first impact report.

**Adam, Amy & Tara**  
Partners



# Our Work

Native Ecology is an award winning CIEEM (Chartered Institute of Ecological and Environmental Management) Registered Practice that offers an extensive range of ecology services, suitable to inform planning applications from small to large scale residential and commercial developments, through to wider landscape scale ecology strategies.

**We specialise in supporting developers and landowners through the new Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) requirements, offering the following services:**

## ECOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal
- Protect Species Survey
- Mitigation & Enhancement Strategies
- Ecological Impact Assessment Report

## BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN

- Baseline Habitat Assessment
- BNG Assessment
- Biodiversity Gain Plan
- HMMP

## LICENCES, MITIGATION & MONITORING

- Natural England EPSM Licence Application & implementation
- Species Mitigation & Translocation
- Ecological Monitoring and Management

“We are proud to deliver expert ecological advice to architects, developers, planning consultants and homeowners.”

Amy Wright – Head of Ecology



# Our Mission, Vision & Values

To enable our clients to provide for people and protect nature by creating measurable biodiversity net gains.

For biodiversity to be at the core of designing the built environment, enabling communities and nature to thrive.

## Provide high quality services

To consistently supply our clients with the best evidence-based reports and recommendations following the latest industry guidelines and methodology. We are a Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environment Management (CIEEM) Registered Practice and uphold and promote the standards of professional competence and conduct. We promote the principles of Biodiversity Net Gain, guiding our clients to make measurable contributions to the natural environment.

## Using Business to share knowledge

To deliver Continued Professional Development, using our wealth of knowledge to enable our clients to engage with ecologically conscious design, integrating biodiversity into projects. This early planning not only saves time and reduces costs but provides opportunities to build and conduct business within planetary boundaries.

To share knowledge freely with other ecologists, professionals and the next generation. Raising standards across the industry and providing protection for biodiversity benefits everyone.

## Leaving a positive environmental impact

Discover new ways to achieve and improve what we do, minimising negative impacts on the environment and finding positive ones where we can. We actively seek out our impacts and find ways to reduce them by gaining a deeper understanding of complex environmental problems. We aim to use business to inspire and share climate crisis solutions. Our approach is always avoidance ahead of mitigation, achieving the most we can with minimum consumption.

## Innovate to protect nature

Using integrated cloud technologies, we collaborate effectively to complete our work in a time efficient manner to support our clients throughout their projects. Digital mapping, data collection and sharing underpins efficient and accurate reporting which enables evidence based actions for habitat protection, enhancement and creation.

## Enabling people to thrive

Use the organisation to improve the lives of our employees, their families and the wider community wherever we can. Providing flexibility and learning opportunities to follow a career path that works for all of us. Everyone's lives are different and ecology provides a challenging calendar to navigate each year. We aim to carefully build a diverse community of skilled individuals who collaborate and share experience in a safe and happy environment.

# Our Journey

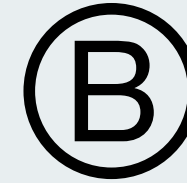
“Becoming a B Corp has created a real sense of pride for our team, confirmation that we are working as a Force for Good, with their success and wellbeing at the heart of our business.”

Adam Bedwell, Partner

We have embedded our values and ethics within Native Ecology from day one, always striving to minimise the negative environmental impacts of our operations and enable people to thrive within the organisation. However, despite our ambition, we rarely found a space to vocalise or document our efforts and progress, so discovering the B Corp movement in 2019 motivated us to begin our journey towards certification.

After postponing the Impact Assessment to respond to the pandemic (2020-2021), we resumed in 2022, resulting in certification in June 2023. We are now part of a strong community of over 2,000 other businesses in the UK and over 8,000 globally that prioritise people and planet, and are glad to finally have recognition for our approach to business. We continue our journey of improvement, with this first impact report helping to hold us accountable as we grow.

Certified



Corporation

## OVERALL B IMPACT SCORE



Based on the B Impact assessment, Native Ecology LLP earned an overall score of 85.6. The median score for ordinary businesses who complete the assessment is currently 50.9.

- 85.6 Overall B Impact Score
- 80 Qualifies for B Corp Certification
- 50.9 Median Score for Ordinary Businesses



GOVERNANCE

13.7



WORKERS

27.1



COMMUNITY

12.1



ENVIRONMENT

29.5



CUSTOMERS

3.0

# Our Governance

All B Corps have a legal requirement to adopt new wording into their governing documents that includes three key commitments:

- 1 To have a material positive impact on society and the environment**
- 2 To move from shareholder priority to stakeholder priority**
- 3 To produce an annual impact report to enhance transparency**

For us making this change was exciting, a way of formalising into our partnership the way that we have always run our business, confirmation that our triple bottom line approach was well aligned with being B Corp.

Involving stakeholders, especially our employees, in our decisions has been a priority since day one. We are transparent throughout the business and provide regular communication around our company finances, finding that this knowledge empowers our team to deliver what's needed.

As a growing business, it can be hard to consistently create space for strategic thinking, but our plans and goals for this year will keep us accountable, and ensure that we deliver on our commitments.

## OUR GOALS FOR 24/25:

- 1. Map stakeholders and conduct a materiality assessment with goals and KPIs for material topics**
- 2. Create a regular ESG segment in board meetings to ensure accountability**
- 3. Design and deliver a regular ESG training programme to all staff based on agreed goals and KPIs**
- 4. Agree and share a company Code of Ethics**
- 5. Define a clear grievance process for employees, clients and suppliers**



# Our Team

“Native Ecology is an incredibly supportive employer that prioritizes my professional development with a combination of in-house training and accredited courses while promoting an excellent work-life balance.”

Tom Hurst, Ecologist

We have always prioritised the wellbeing of our team above all else, with one of our company values being to ‘enable people to thrive’. The B Corp process encouraged us to consider even more opportunities for our employees and involved us implementing even more initiatives. We are proud that we currently:

- Offer a four-day working week (read more [here](#))
- Are a Living Wage Foundation accredited employer
- Offer an informal profit share of over 5%
- Have no limit on our Learning & Development budget and continuously provide internal and external training as needed
- Invest in developing emerging talent, see our case study [here](#)
- Provide an ongoing review process which enables regular pay rises relative to increased responsibility throughout the year
- An LLP structure gives the Partners flexibility with management and ownership according to life circumstances

## OUR GOALS FOR 24/25:

1. Create a more formal and regular employee survey, with regular requests for feedback
2. Introduce a formal profit share policy and process
3. Work with CIEEM to develop the first ecology apprenticeship, changing access to the industry etc
4. Improve our benefits offering including enhanced parental, compassionate and dependency leave
5. Create a detailed employee handbook and introduce a formal onboarding process that integrates ESG



CASE STUDY

# Our Four-Day Week

The idea of a four-day week was an early goal for our business, even before it gained media attention. The traditional April to September ecology survey season can be intense with long hours and tight deadlines, and while many consultancies manage this through TOIL, overtime, and bonuses, we saw an opportunity to rethink the workload using modern technology.

We started our planning by examining every process and practice across the business to understand where efficiencies and improvements were possible, and then moved on to implementation. We digitised all fieldwork mapping and survey notes, so that they could be recorded in real-time, and streamlined all project management processes.

We launched a 6-month trial of a 28-hour week, Monday to Thursday, on full pay on April 1, 2023 and the initial adjustment was challenging, but as we refined processes, adopted new software, and adapted to the new schedule, we found our rhythm and the benefits became clear.

Due to its success, the trial was extended to the end of 2023 with employees sharing positive feedback and our retention increasing to 100%. As a result, we moved to a permanent 30-hour week on full pay from January 2024.



“The four-day week has enabled me to work full-time for the first time in seventeen years. It’s allowed me to increase my income whilst still giving me time to spend with my children.”

Dani Sheehan, Office Administrator

# Our Emerging Talent

Supporting and investing in new talent in the field of Ecology is a responsibility that we take very seriously, with this in mind during Summer 2023 we offered seasonal fixed term contracts to two individuals currently studying for their Ecology degrees at the Durrell Institute of Conservation and Ecology (University of Kent).

Maia and John joined us to get valuable experience, and in return brought their knowledge, high energy and sense of fun to the team. We were happy to pay them a Living Wage, give them full employee benefits, and offer them extensive training, which continued when they went back to University in October.

On return to university and throughout the final year of their studies, we offered them both flexible contracts, which enabled them to work when they were able to, until they both achieved a first in March 2024! Maia and John are now permanent, highly valued members of our team, and we will re-run this programme as soon as we are able.

In addition to this, during 2024, we have applied to assist with the development of the CIEEM backed apprenticeship programme, which should provide alternative routes into the world of Ecology. If successful, we look forward to reporting on this in next year's report.



“I began working part time as an Assistant Ecologist at Native Ecology at the beginning of my final year of university. Native provided flexibility to find a practical work/study balance and I found that the experience enriched my academic work and understanding of ecology.

Knowing I would graduate with a full-time position in a sector I aspired to work in felt rewarding. Native's four-day week allows me to pursue and develop my own interests such as bird ringing and surveying.”

**Maia Jones**  
Assistant Ecologist

“At Native Ecology, I have always felt supported in my studies, having been allowed to take study leave at key times during my undergraduate degree. The four-day work week now also enables me to undertake a part-time postgraduate degree that I feel I can commit sufficient time to, further supporting my development in the industry.”

**John Rowland**  
Assistant Ecologist

# Our Community

We are a partnership run by three equal partners, Adam, Amy and Tara, and whilst we are majority female owned and led, we still believe that we have more work to do to support diversity within our own business and our industry. Across our business 65% of individuals identify as women, and 100% of employees live locally in and around North Kent, enabling us to support the local economy.

As our business continues to grow, we are committed to better understanding the lack of diversity in the

ecology sector, with a view to providing opportunities for individuals from underrepresented groups.

As a team, we are committed to supporting the Beaver Trust. These incredible creatures rebuild ecosystems and support climate resilience, and we are so lucky that they're on our doorstep in Kent. In March we began a 58 mile hike together (over four separate days) from source to estuary of the river Stour, tracking beavers along the way – and raised over £600!

## OUR GOALS FOR 24/25:

1. Undertake area and sector specific DEI research to produce clear strategy and goals for recruitment, training and commitments
2. Improve supply chain practices through analysis and evaluation, introduce a screening process and design and share a Supplier Code of Conduct
3. Formalise our Giving Back strategy, define partners and increase volunteering
4. Encourage industry collaboration by hosting quarterly meet-ups, tackle our challenges together



# Our Environment

We have been tracking our business carbon footprint since 2022, utilising a combination of spend and actual data to calculate our scope one, two and three emissions. As with many service organisations, our scope one and two is low (1.66 tonnes per annum), and our impact is within scope three (43.8 tonnes).

By the end of this business year, we will have set a Net Zero target and have designed a clear reduction strategy which will include switching to a second electric vehicle when our current van reaches its end of life and introducing low carbon benefits to staff. We have successfully used technology to reduce in person site visits with an estimated 35 tonnes of carbon saved (from 17,765 miles not travelled) during the 2023 Summer season.

We continue to discover, analyse and offset 100% of historic and ongoing emissions to date, working with [Ecologi](#).

Our water usage and waste creation remains extremely low, with clear processes for the responsible disposal of any electrical equipment, and a paperless office policy.

## OUR GOALS FOR 24/25:

1. Set a Net Zero target and align our reduction strategy with SBTi
2. Introduce a simple EMS to measure and reduce energy, waste, water and emissions
3. Explore low carbon staff benefits including cycle to work scheme and an electric vehicle purchasing support
4. Continue to invest in technology to replace in person site visits (e.g. additional Infrared cameras)



# Our Impact

Being credited for the Impact Business Model 'Land/Wildlife Conservation' within the B Impact Assessment was important to us. This IBM rewards businesses who directly prevent environment or ecosystem degradation, which of course is at the core of everything that we do. Biodiversity Net Gain is now a mandatory commitment for all developers to ensure that habitats for wildlife are left in a measurably better state than pre-development, something we have encouraged and facilitated wherever possible prior to the introduction of the new legislation.

In 2018 we were asked to design a biodiversity management plan for our client, a housing developer, which involved the creation of 3 hectares of enhanced habitat for the protected species, the Great Crested Newt (GCN). Using clay as a sustainable alternative, we oversaw the creation of two large ponds to facilitate breeding, and after 6 years, we are hugely encouraged by the success of the habitat. The GCN population on the site has increased from a small non-breeding population, to a medium breeding population, with the habitat management also benefiting other species, including the very rare medicinal leech, and reptiles including slow worms and grass snake.



# Our Clients

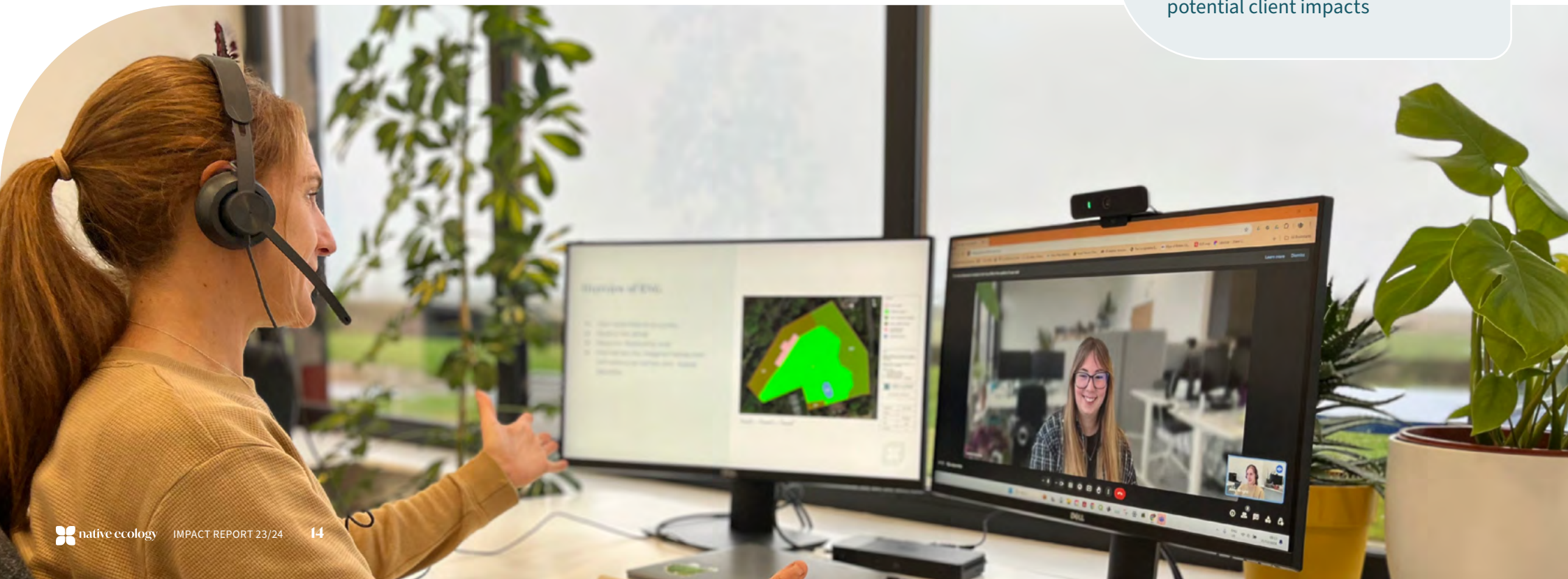
As members of CIEEM, and a registered practice, we are committed to abide by their Code of Conduct, part of which is focused on how we take care of our clients and respond to any complaints and/or feedback.

All our employees undertake data protection and cyber security training as part of their onboarding process to ensure that client data is secure. We proactively seek out feedback from clients post-project, and regularly engage them in discussion about our practices and processes.

For several years we have been running Continuing Professional Development (CPD) sessions for our clients, partners and colleagues, to support them with increasing their knowledge on the Biodiversity Net Gain requirements. These have included webinars for 100s of attendees, workshops for existing clients and short explainer sessions for new clients. We are committed to sharing our knowledge as widely as possible to benefit all (especially wildlife), and with this in mind, Amy also regularly blogs on important Ecology topics on LinkedIn.

## OUR CUSTOMER GOALS FOR 24/25:

1. Create a formal and regular process for client feedback and monitoring satisfaction
2. Implement a system to enable more detailed monitoring of the long-term outcomes of projects that we have contributed to
3. Create an Ethical Marketing Policy that includes our view on AI
4. Implement a Client Screening process and risk assessment to increase awareness and understanding of potential client impacts



# Our Future

In 2025, Native Ecology will celebrate its 10 year anniversary, a milestone which we are excited to celebrate as a certified B Corp, and during our time as CIEEM's 'Small Consultancy of the Year'.

Our key priority moving forward is to formalise our sustainability strategy. To support this, we plan to engage with all our stakeholders and undertake a materiality assessment during Winter 2024/25, and we look forward to sharing the results of this, and our progress towards our goals in next year's impact report.

“The past year has been an intense period of development for our business and for the ecology industry as a whole. We're really proud of what our team has achieved and what we are doing in return for them. We now look forward to the next 12 months of progress as we continue to demonstrate how businesses can be run with the environment and people at the centre of our focus.”

Adam Bedwell, Sustainability & Business Lead

We are on a journey of continuous improvement, and are always open to ideas or suggestions as to how we progress. If you have any comments or feedback on this report, or on our sustainability strategy in general, please email [impact@native-ecology.co.uk](mailto:impact@native-ecology.co.uk)

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