

2022 - 2023

# Social Impact Report



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## Introduction

Welcome to the Let's Do Business Group's second report on Social Impact. We are very proud to deliver support to businesses across the South East and East of England. Support to business creates jobs and wealth that benefits the wider community and contributes to cohesion. We are proud to focus much of our work in ways that help in some of the region's poorest communities.



### OUR MISSION

Our Mission is to provide outstanding quality business advice, support, training and access to finance to aspiring, start up and established businesses across the South East and East of England.

# Launch. Grow. Thrive.



**Graham Marley**  
Chief Executive



**Sean Dennis**  
Deputy Chief Executive

# The Organisation

As a business support provider the organisation has been running for 30 years, although the Hastings Chamber of Commerce was established in the 1920's.

Originally established in 1993 as the Hastings Economic Development Company, as any good social enterprise will do, we extended our operations to improve sustainability – first by becoming 1066 Enterprise and then in 2010 establishing the Let's Do Business Group to acknowledge our far wider reach.

Running for  
**30 years**

We deliver a range of business support contracts for both public and private sector organisations, and in 2003 established Capitalise Business Support Ltd, now trading as Let's Do Business Finance, to lend to start up and established businesses who are generally unable to access conventional bank finance.

View our video for more on how we help our clients



# What we deliver

Between 2022-23, we've delivered a range of business support projects across the South East and East of England:

PROJECT	DESCRIPTION
	The Inward Investment and business support service for East Sussex. A partnership with East Sussex County Council, Eastbourne, and Hastings Borough Councils, and Rother, Lewes, and Wealden District Councils. We provide businesses with a range of support with a focus on finance and property and work closely with potential investors, landlords, and local authorities to encourage new commercial development and investment in the County.
	Recovery Loan Scheme (and previous COVID related loan schemes) – we are authorised by the British Business Bank to provide loan finance under these loan schemes. In addition we have our own Growth Loan product for businesses that do not qualify for a BBB backed scheme.
	Let's Do Marketing is a marketing consultancy and marketing services agency here to support new and small businesses with launching, growing, and joining the dots to get their marketing messages out into the world.
	In partnership with the British Business Bank we provide Start Up Loans across the South East and East of England.
	Working with Newhaven Enterprise Zone to deliver £150,000 worth of grant funding to businesses in Newhaven to redevelop unused land and commercial buildings, aiding businesses to unlock space for growth.
	Networking and representation for the Hastings business community.
	Supported by funding from NatWest, this is a start up programme for female entrepreneurs from East Sussex and Kent.

PROJECT	DESCRIPTION
	An Essex County Council funded project to provide business support across the County. The project was augmented by further funding from North Essex authorities, to ensure that advice on business finance was available to all that need it. The project also includes the delivery of a range of workshops working with the University of Essex and FRP Advisory and a Peer to Peer Network, Group to Grow.
	The Multiply programme, a countywide campaign launched by Essex County Council, is part of the UK Government's Levelling Up strategy, and aims to improve adult numeracy and create 'Skills for Life' for residents in the county – improving wellbeing, boosting career prospects, and managing finances.
	In partnership with the Southend on Sea City Council, and fully funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, we're here to give businesses in Southend on Sea the practical support to strengthen their working practices, and access to finance to grow their business.
	The North Essex Economic Board (NEEB) is a partnership of local authorities in the area working together as a catalyst to drive forward economic growth. Each has committed funding specifically to support local businesses with advice, guidance and training as well as skills programmes to boost the life chances of local residents and help them into work.
	Under contract from Lewes District Council we manage the Centre, and provide business advice and events for tenants.
	Under contract from Essex County Council we manage the Centre and provide access to business advice for tenants.
	Under contract with Maidstone Borough Council we provide business support from The Business Terrace in Maidstone.
	Our South Downs, a new free business network created by the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA), aims to bring together businesses to protect the UK's newest national park, and support them in becoming more sustainable in their practices.

# GROUP PERFORMANCE

2022-23



**4349**  
Start up clients

**1691**

Established businesses



**400**  
New businesses created

**752**

New jobs created



**550**  
Female clients

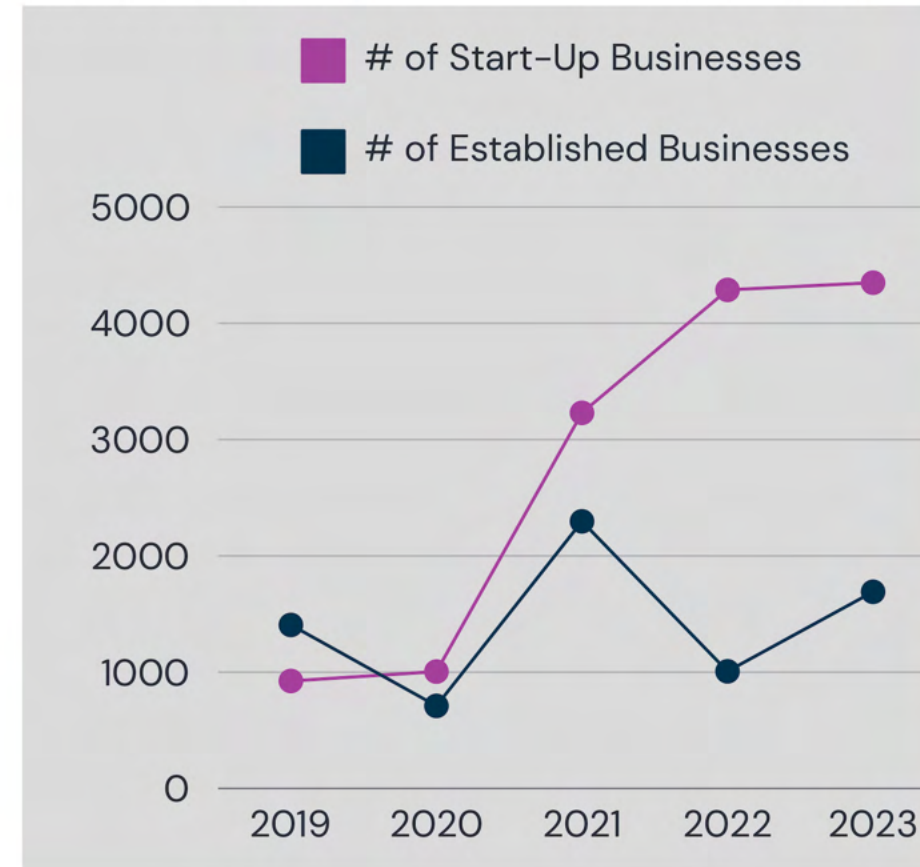
**266**

Clients from an ethnic background



## 2019 - 2023

Number of Pre-Start and Established Businesses



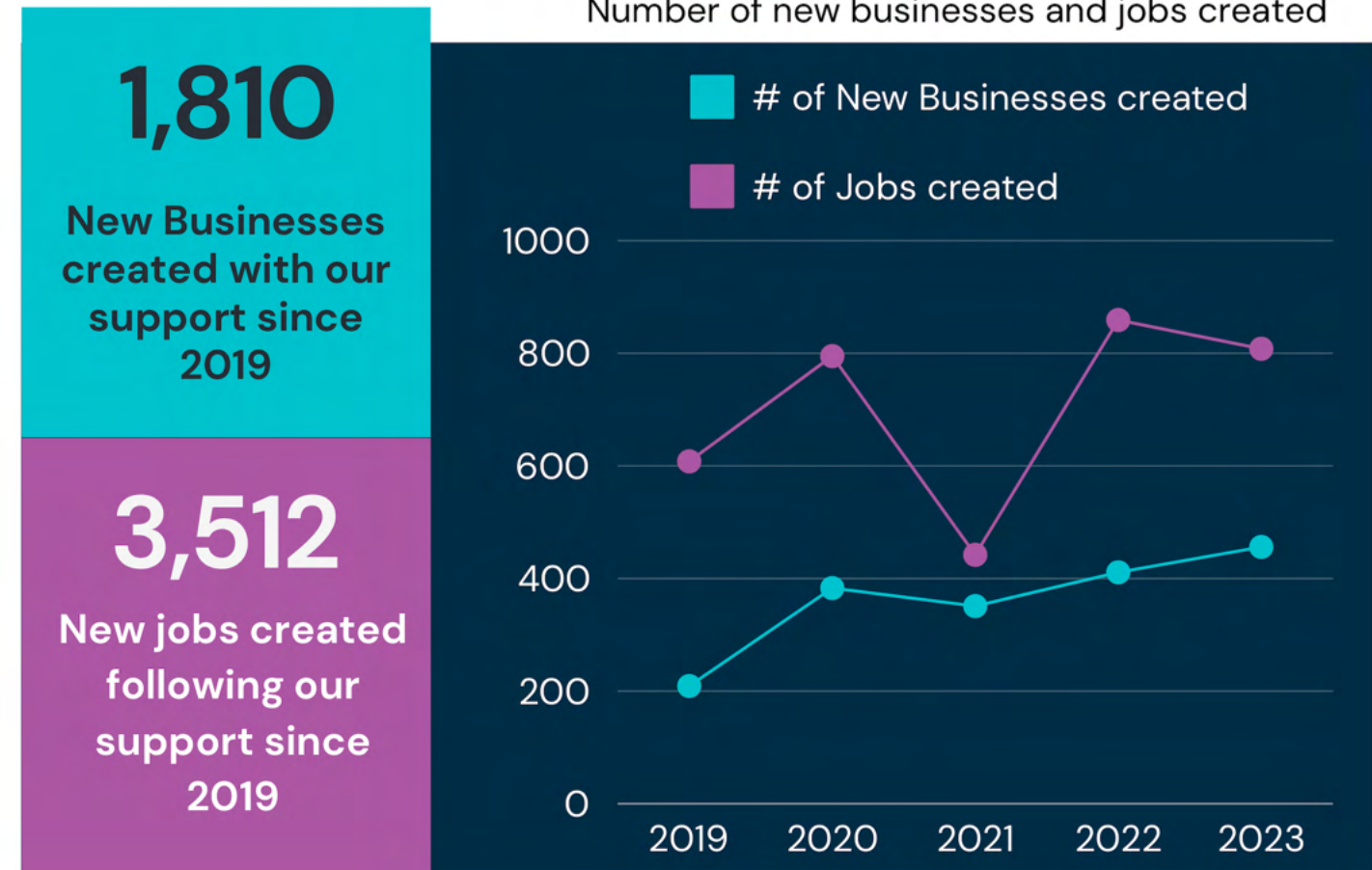
**13,795**

Start-up  
Businesses  
supported in the  
last 5 years

**7,111**

Established  
Businesses  
supported in the  
last 5 years

Number of new businesses and jobs created



**1,810**

New Businesses  
created with our  
support since  
2019

**3,512**

New jobs created  
following our  
support since  
2019

# SPLASHROBE

**Eleanor Ward from Chichester, West Sussex, secured £25k in funding from Let's Do Business Finance under the Start Up Loan scheme to bring her idea for company 'SplashRobe' to life.**

### Creating a swim robe solution

After falling in love with open water swimming in 2018, Ellie also fell in love with using changing robes - and this evolved into using them when camping and in every day life. The convenience, the comfort, and the practicality, not to mention the multiple uses - changing robes had become a staple of her new hobby, but despite this, she had bright ideas for how products from even the leading brands could be improved. Sometimes struggling with manual dexterity in her hands, she knew others might feel the same, and value an alternative - but the turning point was yet to come.

### Taking the plunge

Up until 2020, Ellie had been a solicitor by trade - but after having a baby and losing her mother that year, swimming transformed into a way to process her grief and find a new identity. With fresh motivation and pushing herself further, Ellie amazingly then swam the English Channel as part of a relay team, and quit her job to pursue an otherwise unexplored course. She decided to follow her instincts with her earlier thought of creating a product that she, her fellow swimmers, and lots of other people could use and enjoy - a new, innovative type of changing robe.



“It’s been such a learning curve. You spend years getting up the ladder and then you’re at the bottom of the ladder when you go to start your own business.”

– Eleanor Ward, Founder of SplashRobe, on creating her own business

Becoming an entrepreneur was a brand new playing field for Ellie. Creating, marketing and getting a new business off the ground was something she’d never imagined, let alone designing a product. From the inkling of an idea back in 2018 to committing to the beginnings of the creation of a product that could one day be loved by swimmers everywhere in 2020, she started to learn from scratch how she could make it a reality.

### Jumping in the deep end

After finding a product designer to bring her idea to life in 2020, ‘SplashRobe’ hit the ground running. Taking inspiration from products she’d already used and loved, and her ideas on how they could be improved to be even better, she began to work on patenting a design for SplashRobe. She had ideas for a product that would be even more convenient, featuring a patented handy magnetic closure that would negate the use of zips and wasn’t anywhere else on the market. She knew focusing on a product with easy closures would be helpful with her own dexterity issues felt with the cold water, and from her market research and speaking to fellow swimmers, it could be beneficial for a range of other people too - from people that might have compromised mobility, to children too.



“When I got the finance approved it finally felt real and like it was happening. It’s scary, but exciting!

It’s almost impossible for the average person to start a business, and that’s why the support from Let’s Do Business has been so good. They’re helping a lot of people out there!”

### That’s a wrap

After landing on her designs and chosen materials, Ellie was ready to go. Having generated a lot of interest from the swimming community, Outdoor Swimmer magazine and even people on the local football pitch, she wanted to get ahead of the ever-changing market and get SplashRobe into production.

To do this, she began to make a plan for how much this would cost her; the actual production, the marketing, distribution, and everything in-between. Getting to grips with what her business model might look like, she got in touch with the team at Let’s Do Business Finance to see what options were available to her as a new business. After completing her application form for a Start Up Loan, the team at Let’s Do Business Finance were able to release £25,000 of funding to Ellie to enable her to put SplashRobe into production and to patent her unique designs in the UK and in the EU.

# Lending Statistics



**£7,232,707**  
lent in 2023

Let's Do Business Finance are an official delivery partner of The Start-Up Loans Company and deliver Start-Up Loans of up to £25,000 to aspiring entrepreneurs and businesses under three years old.

If a business has already been trading for three years+ or you do not meet the Start Up Loans criteria, we offer Growth Loans ranging from £10,000 to £150,000 with up to a 6-year term.

We are also accredited lenders of the Recovery Loan Scheme (RLS) under the British Business Bank, and we offer loans from £25,001 - £150,000.

5 year trend of lending



## AGE GROUPS STATS BREAKDOWN

**29.6%**  
16-29 YEAR OLDS

**55.8%**  
30-49 YEAR OLDS

**14.6%**  
50+ YEAR OLDS



*The support has enabled us to invest our future as a company. We were named in Forbes' 30 under 30 list as one of Europe's most innovative companies, which is a testament that support such as this is having a positive impact on UK innovation"*

— Ekkist, Guildford

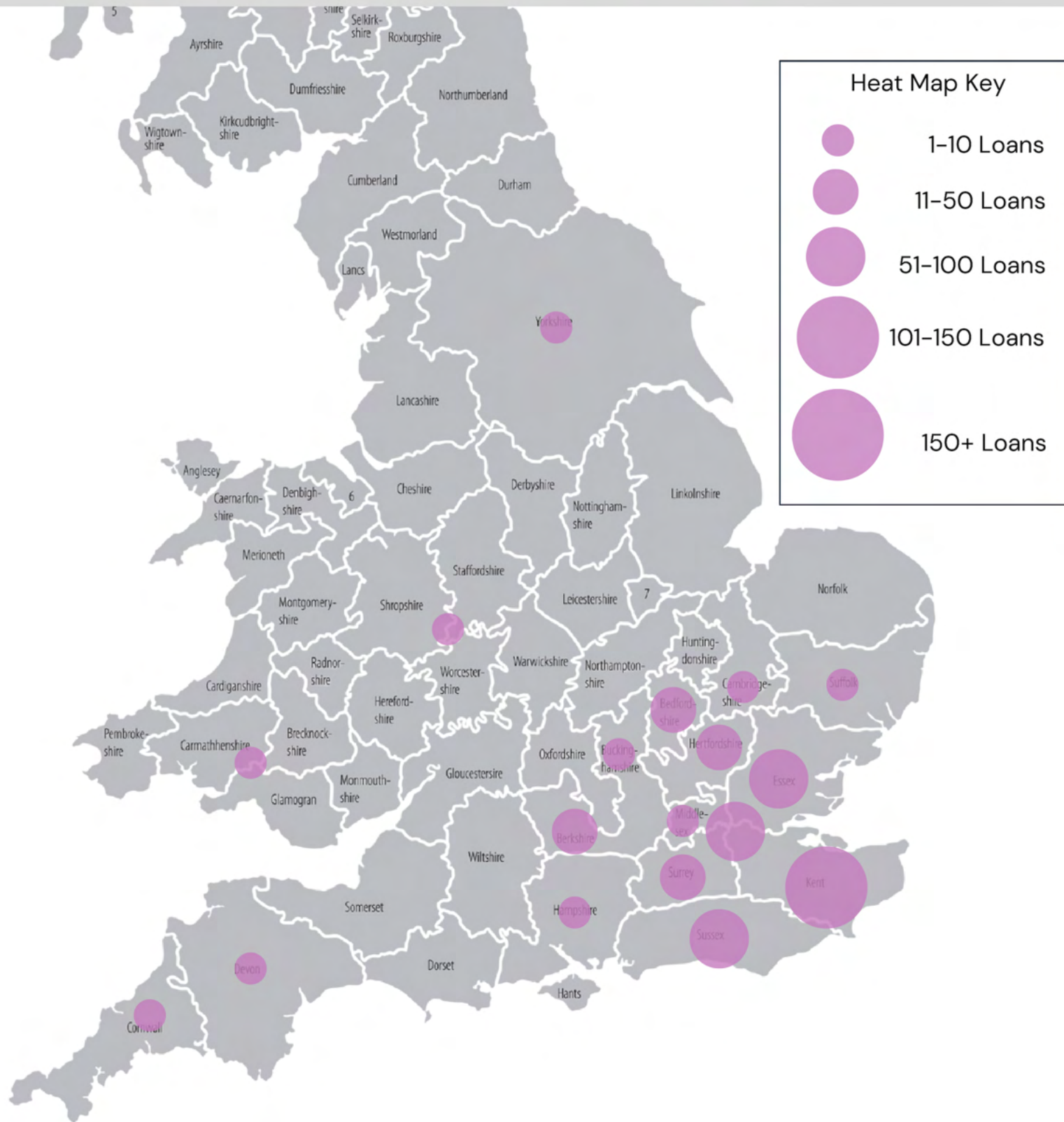


## LENDING STATS BREAKDOWN

**27.1%**  
FEMALE CLIENTS

**38.5%**  
CLIENTS FROM AN ETHNIC  
BACKGROUND

# Map by Number of



# Map by Loan Value







# Economic Value Impact

Impact calculator source: [www.responsiblefinance.org.uk](http://www.responsiblefinance.org.uk)

The Responsible Finance economic impact calculator was developed by Coventry University and was kindly supported by Citi. In 2019 it was reviewed by Marc Cowling, Professor of Entrepreneurship at Brighton Business School.



# What our clients say...

I took part in the "Ready For Biz" workshop, I absolutely loved it! Fantastic experience staff with loads of knowledge. I'd highly recommend!



Let's Do Business has enabled me to progress with my business objectives and has honestly opened up options for me that were otherwise unavailable.



Every step of the way I was given clear, detailed instruction and provided with quick customer service.



I was surprised by the way the team was very engaged and supportive. Our contact manager was very exceptional in handling our finance process.



Many thanks to Helen and Lisa for delivering a high quality Her Biz Workshop. 5 star content, execution and collaboration. I can't praise and recommend it highly enough, well done ladies.



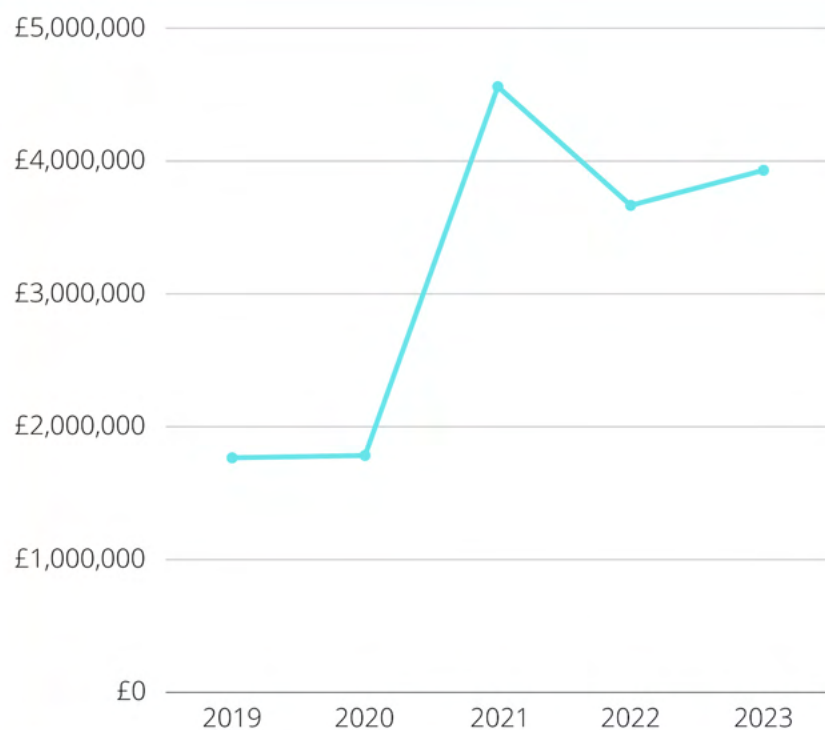
Thanks to Emily and the team at Lets Do Business, I am now able to move forward with my business and feel confident that I have the perfect space to grow and thrive.



I applied for a business loan with them. The process was very straightforward and my case manager was very professional.



I received excellent support and guidance. I was also able to get access to some free business growth webinars that I found very useful.



## Funds under management (Loan Book Value)

# 123%

Funds under management growth has grown in the last 5 years

## LUCY CAN'T DANCE

**Ran from a small tropical studio in the heart of Chelmsford, Lucy Roe, owner of alternative bridal wear business Lucy Can't Dance, sought support from business support service Backing Essex Business to navigate the post-pandemic wedding industry.**

A breath of fresh air and a pop of colour, Lucy Can't Dance creates alternative bridalwear with a retro twist – taking inspiration from the 60s/70s, dresses from Lucy Can't Dance are handmade, and are full customisable to suit each individual bride's personality and style.

"Each dress is lovingly handmade from scratch in our tropical little studio by our small team of 5. Every dress is handmade especially for our brides, and we pride ourselves in taking extra special care with every one of our dresses."

– Lucy Roe, Owner, Lucy Can't Dance

### Eat, Drink, Dance

Always experimenting with funky styles and colours, Lucy Can't Dance puts inclusivity at its heart. Stocking sizes up to UK Size 26, Lucy's motto is 'Eat, Drink, Dance' – and strives to make brides feel amazing and comfortable on their wedding day, in a dress that reflects their personality.

### Something new, and something blue!

From her mum's spare room to now owning her store in Chelmsford, Lucy Roe had never imagined herself creating bridalwear. After starting her career in a dressmakers shop who were seeking out interns, she fell in love with pattern cutting and creating her own everyday pieces, and turning her love of vintage style into her own collection. Come 2015, after creating a dress for a photoshoot, she had the honour of making a bespoke dress for a friend's wedding – and Lucy Can't Dance blossomed.



### A changed industry

The arrival of COVID-19, like much of the wedding industry, brought difficult times for Lucy Can't Dance. Adapting to the times, Lucy and the team conducted wedding dress showings and fittings over Zoom, but with weddings and events called to a standstill with social distancing measures in place, there was only so much that could be done.

Post lockdowns, the wedding industry was playing catch-up to make up for lost time. Lucy and the team were working overtime to get dresses made and serve brides that had had postponed and cancelled weddings, as well as those planning them. The pandemic had meant a changed industry, where the future was uncertain – attitudes towards having a costly wedding had changed, in addition to financial hardship felt across the UK with a rise in the cost of living. Rises in energy costs meant that customers for every industry felt the pinch, while businesses struggled with a subsequent loss of sales and rising operational costs.

Lucy Can't Dance had the same challenge. To secure the future of the business, Lucy sought support from local organisations to see if there was any funding available or practical help that could see the business through the tough times.

Lucy was referred to Backing Essex Business, a business support service fully funded by Essex County Council, to find out about the options for her business. Put in touch with Business Manager Robert Laurie, she was able to receive expert advice on how to prepare and navigate the business for the times ahead.



"Robert was good. It was good to just chat to someone and offload. He helped me go through all the cash flow and see where the monthly payments were so we could prepare for the winter energy prices going up, as well as anything we could get rid of monthly to make payments a bit easier, and helping us to tie off any loose ends with debts etc. It really helped to look at the cashflow and see what we needed to take in each month."

As for the future of Lucy Can't Dance, this year is looking promising. With COVID in the rear-view mirror and the postponed weddings from 2020/2021 out of the way, it's hoped that the industry might settle into a 'new normal', which might also lead to more and more people turning to a bridalwear brand that really reflects their personality and style – which will hopefully mean we see more of Lucy Can't Dance in the future!

# UN Sustainable Development Goals



## What are they?

- The UN Sustainable Development Goals are a framework of guidelines meant to be implemented, most commonly in governmental/corporate policy, to make sure development processes can be sustainable and not counterproductive to human growth. The goals were developed around basic human needs such as healthcare, education, tackling poverty, but also encompass socio-economic issues such as racial-inequality, and spurring economic sustainability.

## Why do we use them as a framework?






- Being a non-profit organisation, the Groups core values and mission very much align to many of the goals. By adopting and measuring ourselves against this framework we can play our part developing our communities.

Goal	Goal definition
<p><b>1 NO POVERTY</b></p>	End Poverty in all it's forms everywhere.
<p><b>2 ZERO HUNGER</b></p>	End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.
<p><b>3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING</b></p>	Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.





How we apply the goal	Interventions and outcomes
We work across some of the most socially and economically deprived communities in the country – with pockets of severe deprivation on a par with anywhere else in the country. The Coastal communities of the South East and East of England are acknowledged as having severe challenges, but many of our rural areas suffer similar challenges.	Let's Do Business Finance was established to support businesses who were unable to access finance to start and grow. Our lending alleviates poverty and supports economic growth within our communities. Total lent in the year: £7.2 Million
It is recognised that the poorest families are also likely to have the poorest diets and nutrition – by seeking to alleviate poverty we contribute to this goal.	In addition to our lending, we also work and support local partners – at Christmas 2022 we coordinated a donation to The Snowflake Trust on behalf of the business and Hastings Area Chamber of Commerce.
Ensuring that our own colleagues have good health and access to support when required.	In addition to our statutory requirements regarding Health and Safety and First Aid we have two staff trained in Mental Health Advocacy. During COVID we introduced a more flexible approach to work including optional home working. We have won a Bronze Award from East Sussex County Council for its Wellbeing at Work Programme.

Goal	Goal definition
<p><b>4 QUALITY EDUCATION</b></p> 	<p>Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.</p>
<p><b>5 GENDER EQUALITY</b></p> 	<p>Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.</p>
<p><b>6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION</b></p> 	<p>Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.</p>
<p><b>7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY</b></p> 	<p>Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.</p>
<p><b>8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH</b></p> 	<p>Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.</p>

How we apply the goal	Interventions and outcomes
<p>We believe that young people are our future and that we need to encourage a rise in aspirations and engagement of young people.</p>	<p>We are a Cornerstone Employer for the East Sussex Careers Hub, an Industry Champion and undertake a range of interventions in support of schools, colleges and Universities – in the year we provided an Enterprise Advisor for Cavendish School in Eastbourne, undertook 3 Mock Interview days.</p>
<p>Women led businesses are a vital part of our economy and we actively support women to start and grow their businesses.</p>	<p>We actively promote self-employment to female clients with over 550 female entrepreneurs and business owners supported in the year. We have signed the Women in Finance Charter.</p>
<p>Where possible we will support businesses that seek to promote sustainable management of water and sanitation.</p>	<p>We have not directly contributed to this measure this year.</p>
<p>We will review opportunities for our property portfolio to utilise sustainable fuels.</p>	<p>Ongar Business Centre has access to EV charging points. Newhaven Enterprise Centre already has solar panels and we are reviewing the possibility of equipping Ongar in the same way.</p>
<p>All of the Company's activities support economic growth in the communities we serve.</p>	<p>All loans and support provided. In the year ending March 2023, LDBG approved 464 loans to start-ups and existing businesses for growth. The combined value of these loans for this year was £7,232,707. Additional to this value, by safeguarding 892 jobs and creating 725 jobs, it could be estimated that around £36,000,000 economic value was added to the UK economy.</p>

Goal	Goal definition
<p><b>9</b> INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE</p> 	Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation.
<p><b>10</b> REDUCED INEQUALITIES</p> 	Reduce inequality within and among countries.
<p><b>11</b> SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES</p> 	Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.
<p><b>12</b> RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION</p> 	Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.
<p><b>13</b> CLIMATE ACTION</p> 	Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.

How we apply the goal	Interventions and outcomes
We provide support to businesses seeking to innovate – ensuring they get the most appropriate support by working in partnership with other business support providers.	We signposted 1388 businesses to business support providers including Innovate UK, various Universities and other funded support to enable businesses to innovate.
We will work to increase support levels of engagement with underrepresented groups and areas.	During this time, we have worked with Ukrainian and Arabic refugees by supporting them and learning how to transfer their skills into an income through workshops – Her Biz, International Women’s Day
Everything we do is aimed at supporting sustainable economic development in our communities – the majority of which suffer some form of disadvantage.	Our lending supports new business and existing business to grow and develop – supporting economic growth. The value of jobs created equates to £35.5m (based on Regeneris output unit costs and definitions).
We actively try to minimise consumption.	Our Purchasing Policy includes a policy of ‘Buying Local’, supporting the Circular Economy. Our Business Centres review suppliers annually, but are also looking at ways to reduce their carbon footprint. Both our Newhaven and Ongar Business Centres have converted to LED lighting. Ongar also has electric car charging points.
We will seek to minimise our own carbon footprint and support clients to reduce theirs.	<p>We actively signpost clients to locally available support with sustainability, for instance, we’ve been working with the South Downs National Park Authority’s, Our South Downs Business Network.</p> <p>Our own working practices have reduced travel time (both commuting to the office and clients), using systems like DocuSign to save printing and paper usage, introduced recycling bins in offices and have stopped using disposable cups and plates.</p>

Goal	Goal definition
 <p><b>14</b> LIFE BELOW WATER</p>	<p>Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.</p>
 <p><b>15</b> LIFE ON LAND</p>	<p>Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.</p>
 <p><b>16</b> PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS</p>	<p>Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.</p>
 <p><b>17</b> PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS</p>	<p>Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development.</p>

How we apply the goal	Interventions and outcomes
<p>We will work with clients in the maritime industry to support their sustainability.</p>	<p>We worked with Eastbourne and Hastings fishermen to access grants worth over £50,000, as well as general business support.</p>
<p>We work with rurally based businesses who are seeking to promote the sustainable use of land.</p>	<p>We have not directly contributed to this measure this year.</p>
<p>We will work with partners to promote peaceful and inclusive societies.</p>	<p>We continue to support our local communities, working in partnership with various bodies to improve sustainable economic development. In Hastings this is actioned through our role as the Chamber of Commerce, being an active partner of the Local Strategic Partnership.</p>
<p>We are committed to partnering in the promotion of these goals.</p>	<p>We will work towards setting SMART goals for future reports and commit to reviewing our social value on an annual basis.</p>

# Corporate Social Responsibility

We believe that all employers should support their local community. Our primary focus is supporting young people – they are the next generation of employees and they will drive our economy.

Unfortunately employers and our own experience tells us that in more deprived areas young people can lack aspiration and role models so we invest our time in providing support to schools.

**CAREERS  
EAST SUSSEX**

Organisationally we are a Cornerstone Employer and Industry Champion for the East Sussex Careers Hub – working both strategically and operationally to improve Careers Learning.



Our Chief Executive is the Enterprise Adviser for Cavendish School in Eastbourne and colleagues support a range of Careers activities in schools, colleges and Universities – including work experience, mock interviews, talks and special events.

For each member of staff we commit to an intervention with an educational institution equating to over 35 each year. Our contribution to activities supporting schools is over £2000 per annum.



## INVESTING IN EMPLOYEES

All our colleagues have a Development Plan and we encourage them to look at both business and interpersonal skills. Much training is undertaken in house, however we also give opportunities for outside learning and Apprenticeships.

RECOGNISE

# Emily Wright wins 'Enterprise Support Champion of the Year'

Let's Do Business Group Business Manager Emily Wright won 'Enterprise Support Champion of the year' at the 2022 National Enterprise Network Awards.

The 'Enterprise Support Champion of the Year' award is awarded to a person who goes above and beyond in support of enterprise, and has made a huge difference in their community this year.



***I am over the moon to have won this award. I cannot thank the Let's Do Business Group enough for supporting me and encouraging me to carry on developing myself. I wouldn't be able to achieve this award without the support from them and from the rest of the team!***



Let's Do Business Group nominated Emily, to highlight her continuous effort and the passion she demonstrates on a daily basis when supporting businesses in the South East. Throughout her career she has had to overcome a series of challenges, but through her determination and enthusiasm, she has established a fulfilling career doing something she loves, whilst continually improving herself through a series of qualifications. Having now been a Business Manager for 3 years, Emily provides an invaluable contribution to the team, supporting over 100 businesses across East Sussex, driving their potential growth and helping to create vital jobs for the county.

EMILY WRIGHT

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

## HELP TO GROW MANAGEMENT COURSE

**Help to Grow: Management Course UK**  
Training to help SME business leaders to increase productivity, seize investment opportunities and grow their business.

The Help to Grow: Management Course will help you boost the performance and resilience of your business. Designed and delivered by entrepreneurs and industry experts at world-class business schools, this leadership course will provide time away from the challenges of running a business to invest in your leadership, and to learn how to take your business to the next level.

Let's Do Business Group takes immense pride in offering opportunities for further development. We believe that continuous growth is essential for individuals and businesses alike. As such, we are dedicated to providing resources and programs that empower individuals to enhance their skills, expand their horizons, and reach their full potential.



**Brett Pearson**  
Service Director  
Locate East Sussex

✓ Completed in July, 2023



**Stacey Pretty**  
Marketing Director  
Let's Do Business Group

✓ Starting in September 2023



**Emily Wright**  
Business Manager  
Let's Do Business Group

✓ Starting in February 2024





# Digital Marketing Level 3 Apprenticeship

Molly joined Let's Do Business Group back in May 2022, working as a Marketing Assistant Apprentice for Locate East Sussex. Throughout school and college, she found she had a particular interest in all things creative such as social media, photography and content creation, leading to furthering her education and beginning a career as an apprentice. After almost 18 months, working on multiple contracts within the Group, sitting two exams, and is on track to finish early, the apprenticeship has allowed Molly to grow and develop as well as expand her previous knowledge.

Let's Do Business Group is proud to embrace the opportunity to mentor and develop apprentices. We believe in the power of hands-on learning and growth, and our commitment to taking on apprentices reflects our dedication to nurturing the next generation of talent. By providing apprentices with real-world experience, guidance, and mentorship, we are not only investing in their futures but also enriching our own team with fresh perspectives and innovative ideas. As a business, we understand the importance of creating pathways for young individuals to enter the workforce, and we are excited to contribute to their professional journeys. Together, we can build a brighter future and cultivate a skilled workforce that drives success and innovation in our industry.



***This apprenticeship has been a great opportunity to learn about my field of interest and also the business itself! I've had the best time working and learning with an incredible team.***

**MOLLY OLIVER**

# AWARDS

**In 2022-23, Let's Do Business Group were nominated for a few awards**

Enterprise Support Organisation of the Year (turnover over £750,000) - Recognising organisations who have established and maintained recognition and impact within their local communities this year.

Social Impact in Enterprise Award - Celebrating enterprise support organisations who have demonstrated adding significant value to diverse communities and the wider economy, helping to create opportunities for hard-to-reach groups, BAME entrepreneurs and disabled founders.

Enterprise Support Champion of the Year - A person who goes above and beyond in support of enterprise, and has made a huge difference in their community this year.

Let's Do Business Group receives a 'highly commended' at Sussex Business Awards in the Professional Service of the Year category.

Let's Do Business Group and Let's Do Business Finance were nominated for two prestigious awards at the 2023 Sussex Chamber Business Awards - 'The Rapid Riser' Scale Up Business of the Year, and 'The Problem Solver' Business Diversification Award!

Let's Do Business Finance were named in the NatWest Top 100 UK Social Enterprises by Pioneers Post in partnership with NatWest Social & Community Capital.



## HER BIZ SEPT 2022 WINNER

**Owner of ethical clothing company 'Terrakah', Jazzmin Kelly wins £500 through NatWest Her Biz workshop programme**

A brand with a passion for fashion and sustainability at its heart, Jazzmin Kelly from Canterbury, Kent, hopes to create an alternative to fast fashion with her start-up business 'Terrakah', by creating beautiful, ethical and high quality garments that will stand the test of time.

Jazzmin won £500 towards her start-up costs for Terrakah after taking part in the NatWest funded Her Biz start-up workshop programme, and submitting her winning business plan to the following optional competition, which is open to all participants.

The Her Biz programme, which is delivered by Let's Do Business Group and support by NatWest bank, consists of 4 x 2 hour workshops over 4 weeks, and aims to increase entrepreneurship by breaking down the barriers between women and starting or growing a business. Delivered virtually over Zoom by two expert business coaches, the programme has been a long running success since it launched over 3 years ago.

### Terrakah: sustainable at its core

It's Jazzmin's goal for Terrakah to manufacture and sell ethical and sustainable clothing online, and it to grow into a well known brand not just for its aesthetic and well made pieces, but for it's ethical and sustainable values that resonate with the modern shopper. She hopes to create fashionable pieces that don't compromise on quality or the treatment of the people that make them, either; sourcing fabric from deadstock suppliers in wholesale quantities, and using ethical manufacturers in both the UK and India to create a 100% transparent supply chain.

Terrakah's designs will lean towards a more bohemian style, with the colours, textures and shapes offering a timeless feel that customers can wear over and over again.



Sustainable fashion is a passion of mine. I would like Terrakah to create beautiful clothes that are ethical, sustainable, and contribute towards the solution of fast fashion's impact on the global climate crisis.

Having geared her education towards fashion and textiles, Jazzmin acquired a BTEC National Diploma from the University of Creative Arts, Canterbury, where her final project centred on sustainable fashion and materials – planting the seeds for Terrakah.

### Tackling fast fashion and employment gaps

Wanting to make a career out of her creative design skills, and being on the autism spectrum herself, Jazzmin hopes that Terrakah can be innovative in more than just fashion, but in closing the employment gap for autistic women. By starting the new business, she aims to create a work environment that can provide training and employment opportunities for more women like her, and celebrates the unique and creative skills that come with embracing neurodiversity in the workplace.

### Big plans for 2023

Prior to beginning to trade, Jazzmin plans to Terrakah's first garment on the marketing by March 2023, and create it by developing garment designs with an established pattern cutter. The unique and loveable designs will first be made and then sold in a limited quantity on online platform Etsy, before later moving onto Terrakah's own website once momentum picks up.

Terrakah aims to appeal to millennial women who seek aesthetic additions to their wardrobe, but are conscious of the impact of fast fashion on the climate. The brand hopes to tick the box of feminine aesthetic and durability while also keeping up with current fashion trends of earthy tones and textures, but without the murky background of a fast fashion supply chain.



As Terrakah begins to get the ball rolling, Jazzmin plans to first start manufacturing garments in her home work-space, then rent a studio space as sales grow. As well as the manufacturing side, Jazzmin will take on the sales, admin and marketing of the business in the short term, but as the business expands, she'll begin to segment duties across the staff she takes on.

Through the 4 x 2 hour sessions of the course, which covered modules about sales, marketing, finance and planning, Jazzmin was able to formulate a detailed business plan that encapsulated her strategy and goals for her business Terrakah. After completing the course, she submitted her plan to the option Her Biz Business Plan Competition, and won the £500 prize towards her start up costs.

Jazzmin hopes that after her first garment comes to the market from March 2023, Terrakah will grow to acquire sustainability credentials within the first 2 years of operating, and begin to make a difference by offering employment opportunities to neurodiverse women in the workplace.



# Our plan for Net Zero

If all small businesses do their bit it makes a difference. Sharing what we know and small decisions and shifts every week/month leads to something greater. Micro impact all adds up and every step is a move in the right direction.

Let's Do Business Group is committed to achieving Net Zero by 2030.

### What we have done:

- ✓ All our sites use low energy high efficiency LED lighting and are sensor controlled
- ✓ We have reduced paper usage and are using electronic signatures where possible for contracts. By using DocuSign instead of paper contracts, so far we have reduced our carbon emissions by 2614lb, conserved 3279 gallons of water, waved 1113lb of wood, eliminated 180lb of waste.
- Hybrid working has cut down commute hours and public transport is encouraged.
- ✓ We are also using virtual meetings more to cut down business mileage. Our business mileage for 2022 was 66,000 miles less than in 2019.
- ✓ Email inboxes have been cleared, unnecessary newsletters have been unsubscribed from and junk mail deleted. We have halved our stored data and cleared 367GB.
- We have purchased modern clearly labelled Recycling Bins and encourage staff to recycle as much as possible.
- ✓ Staff have been encouraged to keep heating in offices to a set temperature. Heating is set on a timer for office hours. Screens and photocopier are turned off standby when not in use/over the weekend. Kettle to be boiled with what water is needed not overfilled.
- Part of our banking is with Unity Trust Bank. A specialist business bank with nearly 40 years' experience of providing sustainable, ethical banking.
- ✓ Stopped using single use cups and plates etc. we are now using glasses and mugs and not purchasing disposable.
- ✓ We are recycling as much as possible. We have donated old IT equipment and office furniture to local schemes or charities. Donated in the last year: 8 Filing cabinets, 20 office chairs, 27 desks, 5 pedestals, 9 meeting room tables, 16 meeting room chairs, 8 desk dividers, 3 whiteboards, 2 noticeboards, 1 server cabinet, 2 projectors, 1 projector screen, 4 fire extinguishers, 14 phone handsets, 8 mobile phones, 3 display cabinets, 5 laptops.
- ✓ Cancelled our franking machine contract, switched to electronic delivery where possible.
- ✓ Radiators in unused areas of our business centres are turned off
- ✓ Heating in both Business Centres is on timer control
- ✓ Newhaven Enterprise Centre has solar panels
- We re-use grey water in Newhaven Enterprise Centre
- We have planted wildflower and bee-friendly areas in the grounds of Newhaven Enterprise Centre
- Charging points for electric vehicles are available in the car parking area at Ongar Business Centre

### What we are doing:

- ✓ We are working to gather data to accurately calculate our carbon footprint
- ✓ We are working to educate and encourage our tenants and clients to think green
- ✓ Changing our Marketing collateral by reducing printing, sourcing more eco-friendly pop-ups and exhibition materials.
- ✓ We have a buy local policy and use local tradespeople where possible.
- ✓ We are in talks with local organisations and charities to provide volunteering opportunities to colleagues
- ✓ We have joined a toner recycling scheme
- ✓ We are benchmarking and monitoring our energy usage to show reductions

### Future plans:

- ✓ Looking at options for replacing our gas boilers with more eco friendly options.
- ✓ Plant further wildflower areas and tree planting
- ✓ Reducing gas/electricity usage – primarily in our Business Centres.
- ✓ Quarterly monitoring of email account storage, target to reduce overall storage to under 400GB by March 2024, and then 10% pa after that
- ✓ Continue to reduce paper usage, target of 10% per annum
- ✓ Monthly monitoring of mileage and continue to reduce, target of 20% per annum
- ✓ Continue to recycle old equipment

### Client's we have helped on their net zero journeys:



#### The Big Green Internet Project

We met Michael to discuss the project and to see how partnerships have been key to the success of the project, including some helpful advice from Essex County Council's business support programme, Backing Essex Business.

[Read about it here!](#)



#### K GK Genix

Essex-based creative design and print agency K GK Genix gets a helping hand to go green with support from Let's Do Business Finance and Backing Essex Business.

[Read about it here!](#)

# Want to work with us?

We would love to hear from you.

[Get in Touch](#)



**Let's Do Business**  
Group

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