



Midnight Impact Report

20

23

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About us

At Midnight we strive to create positive, meaningful impact. We are a renowned female-led B2B PR agency based in Brighton & Hove and 2023 was a big year for us.

We invested in a new office, website and brand with the strapline: positive, meaningful impact. We use this as a benchmark not just for the work we deliver, but also as a moral compass for choosing the work we pitch for. As a PR partner, not just a PR provider, we believe in challenging our clients to do the right thing, so that meaningful action underpins the stories we tell. Our mission is to be the best B2B PR partner in the UK, helping our clients grow their business and reputation responsibly.

We are committed to sustainability, so in 2023 we decided to work towards BCorp status. We aim to work with responsible companies, regularly reviewing our suppliers to ensure they are the best fit. Our team is actively engaged with our local community and we supported charities in a variety of ways in 2023, from volunteering to donations and providing PR campaigns at a reduced rate.

Supporting wellbeing in our team is a priority. Last year we invested in a new flexible wellbeing employee benefits programme, invested in a company Brompton bike and appointed a Head of People. We believe in being open and transparent with our staff and share regular updates on our financial performance. Employees are involved in all aspects of the business, aiding their understanding and continual professional development.

We've got loads of ideas on ways to boost our positive, meaningful impact on our environment, our staff, community, clients and the way we govern our business moving forward.

Read on to find out more.

Message from our MDs

We feel privileged to own and run Midnight, an agency blessed with a 30-year heritage, and the opportunity for us to build an even better future for all our stakeholders. Our agency has long held a reputation for delivering the client service you'd expect from a small boutique agency, coupled with the standards of a much larger national outfit.

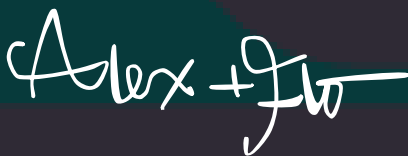
With a core team of 10, supported by a network of independent contractors and specialist partners, we are classed as a micro business. But we have challenged ourselves, in all areas of our business, to aim to rival much larger agencies.

This includes the way we deliver our client consultancy, the benefits and opportunities we offer our team and the way we conduct ourselves in respect of our impact on the planet and the role we play in our local community.

We accelerated our commitment to environmental considerations in 2022, with team training to support our understanding of carbon emissions and the levers we have as a business, prompting us to start our journey to BCorp accreditation.

As trusted advisors to some of the most important business brands, we are aware of the influence we have at times to nudge our clients to make meaningful change too. To this end, we're building a network of partners who can help enhance our client offer in support of this goal.

Welcome to our first Impact Report.



Alex Hankinson & Flo Powell
Joint Managing Directors



Community

We are proud to support our local community in Brighton & Hove and across Sussex.

In 2023 we continued to support [London Gatwick's](#) charitable funding campaign. We started working with [FareShare Sussex & Surrey](#) at a reduced rate to help combat food poverty and prevent food waste, providing pro bono support worth £2,000.

In addition, we donated £3,561 to several charities in 2023 including Brighton Food Bank, Teenage Cancer Trust, Children's Safety Education Foundation, the Clock Tower Sanctuary, the Sussex Snowdrop Trust, as well as donations to school fundraising.

Four members of our team volunteered at the FareShare Sussex & Surrey warehouse in Brighton, which prompted us to explore creating a new policy for every team member to have an annual volunteering day at a local charity of their choice.

Keen to improve diversity in the PR industry, in 2023 we initiated the Sussex PR Diversity Group to enhance sector diversity and mentor emerging talent alongside six leading agencies in our county.

Our joint managing directors Alex and Flo both applied to become mentors as part of the [Girl's Network](#) to support young women from the least advantaged communities in the region.

As members of Brighton Chamber of Commerce, Gatwick Diamond Business and Sussex Constructing Excellence, all our team are actively engaged in the local business community, and Flo is an ambassador for Brighton Chamber.

Next steps

Volunteering

- Create and implement policy for team volunteering days.

Mentoring

- Alex and Flo to complete DBS checks and become mentors as part of The [Girl's Network](#).

DEI training

- Undergo training on inclusive recruitment as part of the Sussex PR Diversity Group with [Watch This Sp_ace](#) and continue to work with other agencies to improve sector diversity.



Environment

In 2023 we decided to work towards BCorp status, with the aim to submit our application by April 2024. Our joint managing director Alex Hankinson signed up to a 12-week webinar programme with Business On Purpose for 2024, designed to support small businesses with their journey towards BCorp certification.

We committed to measuring and publicly reporting our full business carbon footprint on an annual basis and taking action to reduce our carbon emissions. We aim first and foremost to reduce our carbon emissions wherever practical. We will then look to compensate for the carbon we emit by supporting high quality projects that sequester carbon from the atmosphere, including [the Sussex Kelp Recovery Project](#) – a pioneering marine rewilding by Sussex Wildlife Trust to restore lost kelp forest along the Sussex coast.

In 2023, our total carbon footprint was 29.5 tonnes. Our carbon intensity (tonnes of CO2 emissions divided by £m turnover) was 32.5 – considerably lower than the average carbon intensity for businesses in our sector, at 47.7.



Environment

2023	TONNES CO2E
Scope 1	0.00
Scope 2	0.084
Scope 3	28.69
Total emissions	29.53
Carbon intensity (CO2e / £m)	32.5

Environment

We chose a green server to host our new website and moved into a new, sustainably designed office in 2023 which is centrally located – most of our team walk or cycle to work.

To minimise the need for car or bus travel, we invested in a Brompton bicycle for a team member to give them a quicker commute, extending the offer to the whole team with a promise to buy up to four Brompton bikes if needed.

As part of our commitment to reducing our environmental impact, we decided to create a new policy for virtual office stewardship for employees to implement good practices in their home offices, reducing waste and energy use and encouraging recycling.



Next steps

BCorp certification

- Attend webinars with Business On Purpose to support journey to BCorp.
- Involve the wider team in gathering information and completing Midnight's application for BCorp and submit by April 2024.

Carbon emissions

- Record and publish Midnight's carbon emissions and continue to look at ways to reduce emissions.
- Create an environmental policy and action plan and work towards certification with [Green Small Business](#).
- Create and implement policy for virtual office stewardship.

Environment

- Join Sussex Wildlife Trust as an approved business member and offer support through volunteering and pro bono work.

Governance

In 2023 we earned the coveted PRCA Consultancy Management Standard (CMS) accreditation, considered a hallmark of PR and communications excellence. Midnight is one of only 48 agencies nationwide with this recognition and one of only two across Sussex.

The CMS accreditation recognises our commitment to best practice across critical areas including financial management, business planning and client and campaign management. We were praised for our dedication to growth and our comprehensive business plan, which we shared with the entire team. We decided to bring in a two-team structure to simplify the way we work and improve communication. Quarterly KPI trackers were set across all areas of the business for regular review and we created a stakeholder engagement plan, outlining who our stakeholders are and how we communicate with them.

As part of our collaborative ethos and commitment to transparency, we shared salary bands and our financial performance with our team, including at our AGM in June. This was the first AGM of its kind where various team members ran different sessions for everyone – from ways to improve our marketing to how to use AI.

Taking on a new Head of People allowed us to review and improve our processes for recruitment, appraisals, line management and onboarding.

We also introduced a quarterly Midnight newsletter which we share with partners, suppliers and staff.

Another source of real pride in 2023 was winning the PRCA's DARE award for Best Consultancy in London & the South East in the small agency category.



Next steps

Mission statement

- Create a mission statement for Midnight and add to our website.

BCorp

- Work toward achieving BCorp accreditation.

Policies

- Review all of our policies and how they are shared with stakeholders.

KPIs

- Extend KPI tracking and monitoring.

Stakeholders

- Improve stakeholder communication with regular surveys.

Impact reporting

- Review all of our policies and how they are shared with stakeholders.

Clients

We want to partner with businesses who share our values on sustainability and community responsibility, and we recognise this is important for our clients too.

In 2023 we sought out and built a network of trusted specialist partners to support our brand vision to make a 'positive, meaningful impact', covering environmental, social and governance (ESG) issues including diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), sustainability, plus purpose and value proposition development.

Midnight is committed to client satisfaction and we are always looking for new ways we can support or make things easier for clients. In June we created and sent a satisfaction survey to all clients, requesting feedback on our performance.

We received a Net Promoter Score of 80 and last year we had a client retention rate of 75%. Three clients and one former client recommended us to people within their network.

Next steps

Surveys

- Send out biannual 2024 satisfaction survey to all clients, share with teams and act on feedback.

Client consultancy

- Explore creating a client consultancy partnership charter, to build more meaningful relationships with clients.

Ethical marketing

- Produce an ethical marketing policy.

Our people

At Midnight we prioritise staff wellbeing and continual professional development. We are a Living Wage employer offering competitive salaries, performance-related bonuses and hybrid working.

Under a new model we introduced last year, all employees now set their own SMART objectives as part of their annual appraisals, which means each team member can take ownership of their own professional development and set individual goals. This includes setting three personal objectives plus one business objective, as each employee commits to supporting an area of the business – such as client excellence, people & culture or operations.

We appointed a new Head of People to provide additional training and support for staff, including line management training. We also introduced the PeopleHR portal to streamline processes.

To provide more flexibility for our team in the way they use their benefits, we introduced the wellbeing programme With Juno where staff can spend the points they accumulate each month on a wide range of services and products to support wellbeing – from gym membership and fitness classes to holidays, therapies and treatments. This is in addition to the existing benefits which include full private medical cover and a health cash plan. Our team also continues to have access to an Employee Assistance Programme with Care First Zest, offering staff access to 24-hour phone counselling and an interactive health and wellbeing management portal to support in daily life.

Both our managing directors became trained first aiders and we committed to the Workplace Menopause Pledge, promising to enhance support for employees.

Next steps

Financial wellbeing

- Explore and implement new financial wellbeing benefits.

Maternity/paternity

- Review maternity and paternity policies.

Mental first aid

- Extend first aid training for senior management to include mental first aid.

Team empowerment

- Explore ways to further embed team empowerment through individuals' SMART business objectives across the six head office functions.



Get in touch

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