

# BUSINESS SUCCESS

Improving the lives of our clients

Carthy  
Accountants

MAY 2023

# SUSTAINABILITY, COMMUNITY, AND WELLBEING

- **B Corp Status**
- **Carbon Handprint**
- **A Client's Story**
- **Carthy Book Club**
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"A sustainable business is resource efficient, respects the environment and is a good neighbour." Phil Harding



# CREATING A POSITIVE IMPACT

**W**e believe it's important to provide excellent services to our clients and create a positive impact on the world around us.

This month we focus on 'Sustainability, Community, and Wellbeing'. We are always looking for ways to reduce our carbon footprint and increase our carbon handprint. If you want to become a B Corp, then page 3 sets out a path we can walk with you.

If you've ever been to a Carthy Club event, you will know that community is equally important to us. We believe in giving back to the people and organisations that support us and therefore volunteer and contribute to local charities and causes.

Our commitment to wellbeing extends not only to our staff members but

also to our clients. We understand that maintaining a healthy work-life balance is critical to staying mentally and physically well. We provide a supportive and caring work environment to help our team thrive, as our Mindful Employer status shows.

We also work closely with our clients to help them achieve their own wellbeing goals and improve their overall quality of life. See P8 for finding a healthy work-life balance.

As ever, we are here to support you and help you not just survive but thrive.

**Michael Carthy**  
Managing Director

**“ We understand that maintaining a healthy work-life balance is critical to staying mentally and physically well. ”**



# B Corp is changing the way we view businesses

**With capitalism increasingly being seen as the root cause of many of the world's issues, the B Corp concept aims to revitalise the idea of what a business can do and the good that can come from running an ethical, socially conscious, and green enterprise.**

**B** Corp companies aim to make business a force for good by putting sustainability and positive social impact at the heart of their mission. These companies are certified by B Lab, a non-profit organisation that monitors B Corp certification, and must meet the following rigorous standards of social and environmental performance, accountability, and transparency:

- **Social performance:** Looking at how the business interacts with society and how it can use its time, resources, and influence to help local and global communities.
- **Environmental performance:** Measuring carbon footprint, wider environmental impact, and the sustainability credentials of products, investments, and suppliers.
- **Accountability:** B Corp companies are held accountable to a higher standard of performance, transparency, and impact, which helps drive systemic change, creating a more responsible, sustainable economy.
- **Transparency:** B Corps must publicly report their impact data on the B-Impact Assessment, a publicly available document. This gives stakeholders insight into the company's impact and increases accountability.

If you're interested in becoming a B Corp business, B Lab can assess your social and environmental impact, governance, and accountability and provide certification to companies that meet its high standards. B Lab also provides resources, networking opportunities, and advocacy support to help your B Corp grow and achieve a greater, more meaningful impact.

## BECOMING A B CORP

**Becoming a B Corp is a rigorous process, but it's a great way to demonstrate your commitment to social and environmental impact, transparency, and overriding accountability to your employees, customers, and wider communities. To become a B Corp business, you need to:**

- 1. Complete the B Impact Assessment** to measure your company's impact on its workers, community, environment, and governance.
- 2. Get the company certified by B Lab** by meeting strict performance standards around your social and environmental impact, transparency, and accountability.
- 3. Change your legal structure to become a Benefit Corporation**, a new structure that requires companies to consider the impact of their decisions on all stakeholders.
- 4. Agree to re-certify your B Corp every three years** to ensure that your organisation meets the standards B Lab sets.
- 5. Report publicly and transparently on your impact data**, using the B-Impact Assessment and ensuring this report is available publicly to all stakeholders.

If you think this could be a positive step for your business, we can work with you to start your evolution into a B Corp.

# How green is your handprint?



**C**arbon handprint is a concept that is used to measure the positive impact of an action, product, or service on reducing greenhouse gas emissions and mitigating climate change. It's the opposite of a carbon footprint, which measures the negative impact of human activities on the environment.

While carbon footprint focuses on the negative impact of an individual, organisation or industry, carbon handprint highlights the positive environmental actions taken to reduce carbon emissions, improve resource efficiency, and promote sustainable practices. This could include reducing waste, using renewable energy, adopting low-carbon transport options, and improving energy efficiency.

The carbon handprint concept can help individuals and organisations identify and communicate their positive environmental impacts and encourage them to take further action to mitigate climate change. It promotes a more optimistic and proactive approach to addressing the climate crisis, focusing on the positive impact of environmental activities.

## A carbon handprint highlights positive environmental actions

Calculating our carbon footprint and handprint can provide several benefits for both individuals and the environment.

A carbon footprint measures the amount of greenhouse gases produced by our activities. It can help identify areas where we can reduce emissions by changing our behaviour or using energy-efficient products.

The handprint measures our positive actions to reduce our carbon footprint and promote sustainability, such as supporting renewable energy or volunteering for environmental organisations.

You become carbon neutral when you have a handprint and a footprint equal in size. You're not putting out any more than you're taking back in (or offsetting). If your handprint continues to grow and becomes more significant than your footprint, you've become climate positive.



**We are committed to reducing our carbon footprint and increasing our carbon handprint.**

**Actions we have taken so far:**

**Recycling** – although we only have cardboard recycling as part of our waste collection, we have committed to split our recycling in the office and a member of the team takes it home so it doesn't go into general waste.



**Using re-sealable and environmentally friendly water cans** – We have replaced glass bottles of water for our meetings with eco-friendly and re-sealable water cans. This not only reduces glass waste but also water waste.



**Donating or recycling PC equipment** – Rather than simply disposing of obsolete IT equipment, we have donated and recycled hardware that we no longer need. The donations went to charities or initiatives who work with young people. The recycled items have as many components as possible refurbished or removed prior to disposal.



**What actions do you take to be more carbon efficient?  
Have you got any suggestions for us on how we could further improve our carbon efficiency?  
Please let us know.**





## MC on the Radio

**W**e have worked on several community projects over the years. Our MD, Michael, is currently volunteering with local community radio station Stafford FM as their Finance Director and is working closely with the other directors to develop the radio station across the Stafford Borough.

Since starting in January, lots of positive change has happened at the station, and we are looking forward to seeing what new ideas come to fruition over the coming months.

Stafford FM is involved in many community-led projects and is also looking at ways to develop new community-led radio shows in the future, including a local business show. There are also advertising opportunities throughout the daily program of shows, so if either of these interests you, please contact Michael on our office number (01785 248939).

Working with Stafford FM came about after Michael volunteered for several years as the treasurer of the local charity A Child Of Mine. Whilst working on the board of trustees, Michael oversaw huge growth and development of the charity and, by the end of his time within the role, had been involved with some major fundraising initiatives, and we continue to be proud supporters of A Child Of Mine today.

## MINDFUL EMPLOYER

**A**t the end of 2022, Carthy Accountants signed the Mindful Employer Charter, signalling our continued commitment to mental health at work. We have continued to invest in the mental wellbeing of the team by introducing more flexible working hours and investing in a team day with workshops on strategies for managing workload and happiness at work.

Also last year, we partnered with Everyone Health and Staffordshire County Council to participate in a trial of workplace health checks, an initiative that the county council are pushing across the area. The whole team had a health check, and Aaron, Edith, Michael and Tessa all had their checks filmed, followed by interviews about the process.

Giving time to a programme such as this is important to us. It benefits our team and helps promote a vital initiative designed to help the local business community.

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## 'A massive weight has been taken off our shoulders'

Hayley and Lauren of Crystalline Cities were panicking about a potential £60,000 tax bill they would have been facing after their first year of trading. We listened to their story, set them up on Xero, and restructured the business, creating a limited company with them both as directors which was a more tax efficient structure for them and enabled reinvestment and more growth. They now have more staff, a new premises, and a very bright future.

“ We can now work on the business together as a family. ”

Lauren Hind. Crystalline Cities.

Discover how Carthy Accountants can help you:  
[info@carthyaccountants.co.uk](mailto:info@carthyaccountants.co.uk)

Find out more about Crystalline Cities:  
[www.crystallinecities.co.uk](http://www.crystallinecities.co.uk)



## Team News



In April, we celebrated Lucy (top) passing her latest ICAEW exam, bringing her one step closer to achieving her goal of becoming an ACA chartered accountant. We're proud of her hard work and dedication towards her professional development.

Adam (below) has begun his VFD Pro Mastery course, which will equip him with the skills to provide clients with in-depth reporting and management data from our partners at VFD Pro. This will allow us to offer even more value to our clients and help them achieve their financial goals.

Some of our team members will attend Accounttex in London this

month. They will meet with both new and existing software partners to stay up-to-date on the latest tech trends in the industry. They will also attend seminars to learn about the future plans of HMRC, Making Tax Digital, and the wider accountancy world.

We will share a full report on Accounttex in June's newsletter.

We're thrilled to see our team members taking proactive steps towards enhancing their skills and knowledge. As a company, we remain committed to investing in our staff members' professional development to provide the highest quality services to our clients.



# Carthy Club

CONNECT COLLABORATE COMMUNITY

The second Carthy Club of 2023, scheduled for July 5th, will feature a delightful 'British Summer Fete' theme. We have arranged for suitable weather to complement the occasion.

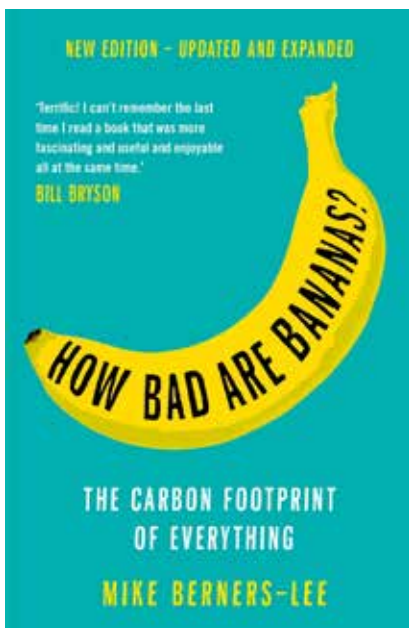
The event will offer ample opportunities to network with local businesses, relish delicious cuisine from GGs, and with any luck, we will have village stocks to lock Michael in and pelt him with sponges, all in support of a charitable cause of course!

If you would like to attend the July Carthy Club, please let us know by email, and we will send an invite:

[clientservices@Carthyaccountants.co.uk](mailto:clientservices@Carthyaccountants.co.uk)



## CARTHY BOOK CLUB



### HOW BAD ARE BANANAS? MIKE BERNERS-LEE

THE CARBON FOOTPRINT OF EVERYTHING.

Exploring the carbon footprint of everyday items and activities, *How Bad Are Bananas?* compares the carbon emissions of everything from a banana to a transatlantic flight.

The book challenges our assumptions about what is environmentally friendly and what is not. Berners-Lee provides fascinating and surprising facts to put the carbon footprint of everyday items into perspective. For instance, did you know that a kilogram of lamb has a higher carbon footprint than a kilogram of beef? Or that driving a car for just 10 miles produces more

CO2 emissions than charging an iPhone for a whole year?

Despite its serious subject matter, the book is very accessible in its writing style, with humour and personal anecdotes to keep readers engaged while also providing clear and concise explanations of complex issues. It's an excellent choice for anyone wanting to learn more about environmental sustainability.

We have a few copies of *The How Bad Are Bananas*. If you would like a copy, contact [info@Carthyaccountants.co.uk](mailto:info@Carthyaccountants.co.uk). Once they're gone, they're gone!

# Work-Life Balance

Achieving the perfect work-life balance can be a stress in itself.

If you are feeling the strain of building your business and maintaining your life, the good news is that stress and a productive existence can go hand in hand. Be mindful, and you can find the best balance for you.

## How much stress is good for you?

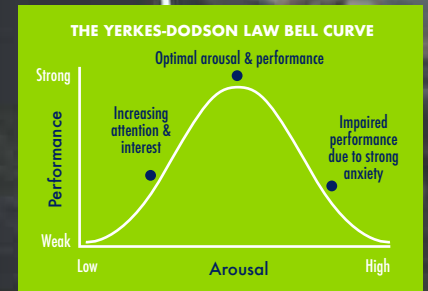
The Yerkes-Dodson law (right) shows that an individual's performance increases with stress (arousal) until cortisol levels get too high and then decreases again just as sharply. The secret is to stop your stress levels from sending you down the other side of the bell curve. How much is too much varies for everyone, but by understanding and managing your stress levels, you can use them for good.

## Is work too stressful? Talk to us.

We can help manage systems, technology, payroll or other financial and administrative management. We can assist with your business concerns so you can get back on track.

At Carthy Accountants, we work on a concept called the three freedoms. Time Freedom, Money Freedom and Peace Of Mind. If your business delivers these three freedoms to you, there is nothing you cannot achieve personally.

If your business is causing you stress, not giving you the income you want, or the free time you need, contact us today about having a Three Freedoms Workshop.



## FIVE WAYS TO MANAGE YOUR STRESS

### 1. TAKE CONTROL

Feeling in control can decrease stress from negative levels by presenting the stress causes as surmountable challenges. Get a handle on your project, tasks, or your day by breaking them down into achievable goals and choosing priorities.

### 2. GET POSITIVE

Your perception of your stress is important; rather than leading to panic and inertia, recognise the first quickening of your heart rate calmly as powerful, making you more alert and capable.

### 3. CONNECT

Social support reduces stress, so good relationships within a team and the wider office environment make everyone more resilient to stress.

### 4. EXERCISE

A good workout reduces bad stress and is good for the brain, heart, and lungs.

### 5. SLEEP

Poor sleep is bad for stress levels and health, so be disciplined about getting a good night's rest; being exhausted will increase susceptibility to further stress and damage productivity.

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Carthy  
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Every client matters