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the
impact
zone

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“I wish you water.”

WALLACE J. NICHOLS, AUTHOR OF BLUE MIND





MESSAGE FROM OUR FOUNDER

Nick Hounsfield

Since founding The Wave back in 2010, we have committed to creating a truly exceptional experience, in a truly responsible way. Looking after people, planet and profit in balance.

I'm incredibly proud that we have continued pushing innovation within this nascent industry and continue to be transparent about the journey and the challenges we face. With numerous inland surfing destinations being developed across the globe, it's more important than ever to lead the way and set a high benchmark of what it means to be a sustainable business in this sector.

From increasing transparency within our supply chain, to delivering exceptional customer experiences, for people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities. I'm hugely grateful to the hard work of our Wavemakers, our suppliers, and our partners as we continue to work together to drive positive change.

I hope you enjoy seeing our highlights, wipe-outs and honesty about what it takes to be a future-facing business that cares.

Keep charging,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nick Hounsfield'.

Nick





MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO

Hazel Geary

Welcome to our latest impact report - and my first as CEO of this truly unique slice of the ocean. This report reflects on another transformative year for The Wave as we strive to deliver a business that is rooted in impacting people, planet and profit positively. This balanced, business approach is central to our business growth in the UK, as well as ensuring that we lead the industry on a global scale.

A personal highlight included the completion and official switch-on of our solar array. This is a huge commitment to preserving the future of our planet. Another very memorable moment was going live on BBC's The One Show as part of World Ocean Day for Schools 2023. Welcoming in 90 young people who would not normally have access to surfing, initiating a connection with water and waves, and creating a new generation of ocean advocates, tapped into everything we are about!

Like any business, there have been challenges in 2023 where we've not made the progress we would have liked and it's important that we reflect honestly and transparently on these to set goals for 2024 and beyond.

Above all, embedding the values of people, profit and planet in ALL our wavemakers has been a focus in my first year. Seeing passionate staff use these as guidelines for making great decisions to offer an exceptional experience for all our customers will continue to set us up to be a thriving and impactful business.

Enjoy our report and thank you for your continued support for The Wave.

Hazel

DIRECTORS

Nick Asheshov
Elliott Cherington
Andy Coachafer
Rahim Dhanani

Hazel Geary
Nick Hounsfield
Richard Sanders
Layton Tamberlin

setting the scene

We experienced another year of evolution for The Wave in 2023, as we embedded the company leadership changes made in 2022.



New CEO, Hazel Geary, joined the business in June 2023 and led a series of team structure developments, ensuring that Bristol continues to improve in all areas as a customer experience, and enabling our ambition to develop more sites in the coming years.

This period of change has been an opportunity to focus with renewed clarity on our company values, which emphasise our respect for people, planet and profit at all times. Our decision-making is based on being profit making, whilst also doing what is right for our staff, our customers, the site we look after and the planet we all inhabit. It is not an easy challenge, but one that we all, as Wavemakers, consider in every one of our tasks.

We've spent time refining how we communicate to all of our community. That includes regular surfers, our marketing and commercial partners, people visiting us for the first time, or indeed local residents who we welcome into our amazing space regularly.



We have brought a slice of the ocean, inland, in order to create a healthier and happier world with every wave. As our experiences grow, we need to ensure that everyone knows we're more than surfing. Whether you're coming to us for a coffee, to play in the park, to splash in the bay or get barrelled, you'll leave The Wave smiling.

The global inland surfing industry continued to evolve at pace in 2023, with new sites being proposed nearly every week, a second Wavegarden-powered site under construction in the UK, and an ever-growing choice of wave-creating technologies entering the market. We remain experienced leaders in the industry, with true insight into the behaviours of regular surfers as well as those starting their surfer journey, and what it takes to attract both audiences. Through all of this, our vision to remain an experience that is accessible for people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities remains firm.

This report documents activity from November 2022 to March 2024, following a revised financial year timeline.

01



riding

the

waves

celebrating

our

successes

Surf coach Emily Williams carries the 'Running Out Of Time' climate relay baton

people

Our highlights
from 2023.



WE DELIVERED

938 surfs

via our social impact programme – these were either heavily discounted or free.

WE SUPPORTED

over 150 adaptive surfers

booking through our usual online ticket system, to visit over the last year. Help included providing extra coaches, in-water support and equipment to make their visits possible – at no extra cost to the surfer, but with a significant cost contribution from the business.



WE SUPPLIED

over £5000

of surfing gift vouchers as prizes to support charity raffles, fundraisers and auctions.

WE SET UP

The option to donate at the online checkout – **raising £4035 in eight months.**



WE BROUGHT IN

90 children from Tower Hamlets in London and Trinity School in Bristol to surf for free on **World Ocean Day for Schools** – working with the team behind this day of ocean learning to incorporate workshops and inspire ocean advocacy

WE RAN

three of our women-only 'Sister Sessions' afternoons dedicated to women and girls – two more than in 2022. These experiences offered bigger wave settings, following feedback and requests from the events in 2022.

WE RAN

a 5-week course for women from Bristol's Muslim community, and other ethnic backgrounds, in association with Open Minds Active and Active Being Connect.

people

Our highlights
from 2023.



WE RAN

four surf therapy courses with The Wave Project, alongside a regular Surf Club for children that have been through a surf therapy course.

WE COLLABORATED

with key partners to enable social impact courses and activity – including Burges Salmon.

WE WORKED

with our partner Dryrobe to provide additional adaptive surf coach training and in-water support team training – to enable us to accommodate para-surfing bookings more quickly and easily.

WE RAN

regular Staff Surf sessions before and after work to make sure all our Wavemaker team get access to the positive effect of blue health on a regular basis.

WE WORKED

with The University of Bristol to enable a student to carry out a Masters thesis, looking at how to measure the impact of surfing on mental health and wellbeing. The final paper was published in 2023.

WE PARTNERED

with the Finisterre Foundation to be able to offer adapted wetsuits for our visitors with mobility issues.

WE TESTED

our Big Blue initiative with The Grand Appeal. This was a pilot to see if we could easily support families and siblings of ill children, with a mechanism for them to book completely free surf experiences. We will build on the success of this in 2024.



01 WAVES OF CHANGE

Working to build a more diverse surfing community – with particular focus in 2023 on gender and ethnicity

02 WAVES OF GROWTH

Supporting and growing the UK's para-surfing community

03 WAVES OF SUPPORT

Working with organisations using surfing and surf therapy to help those struggling with poor mental health

people

“Partnering with The Wave allowed us to create an incredible ‘blue’ experience for children that wouldn’t normally have access to it, and spark curiosity about the ocean. We loved collaborating with the Wave team to help inspire a new generation of ocean advocates.”

– Linzi Hawkins, Protect Blue



WORLD OCEAN DAY FOR SCHOOLS

On 8 June 2023, 90 children from Tower Hamlets, London, and Trinity School in Bristol visited The Wave as part of a World Ocean Day for Schools (WODFS) activity. We partnered with the WODFS team to become a ‘home’ for this global day of ocean-learning, which had previously been a purely digital event. Thanks to the generosity of Burges Salmon, we were able to offer all the children a free surfing lesson, alongside engaging workshops and art activities focused on what it means to be an ocean advocate. In the evening, we hosted a free screening of a series of short films about surfing, sustainability and ocean conservation. All in all, an extremely good day of ocean inspiration!

BLACK TO NATURE

Thanks to a donation from one of our regular surfers we were able to host a group of girls from Bristol-based organisation, Black2Nature. Working with long term collaborator, Yvette Curtis of Wave Wahines, we welcomed a group of 16 in for a weekend beginner lesson – their first taster of surfing! The day went so well that they plan to come back with the boy’s group, so that they can also experience the joy of being in the waves.



THE WAVE PROJECT – A CROWDFUNDER CAMPAIGN

The Wave Project was one of our very first impact partners back in 2020, when we first trialled a surf therapy course at The Wave. This collaboration has grown every year. In 2023 we not only facilitated 32 evenings of surf therapy as part of courses and clubs, with 300 participant hours, but we also worked with the team to enable a film to be made about one of the course participants, which was the focus of major fundraising activity. In September 2023 we helped The Wave Project team launch a Crowdfunder campaign with a screening of ‘Seb – a Surf Therapy Journey’ followed by a panel Q&A. We helped drive donations over the following weeks, and over £6,600 was raised, which will go directly to supporting further Wave Project courses and activity with us – benefiting even more children in the Bristol area.



“Surf therapy has been a game-changer for many children like Seb. This film showcases the beneficial impact that surf therapy can have on young people struggling with their mental health. The water, our surf mentors and riding waves improves a young person’s wellbeing. Following Seb on his journey is the best way we can communicate our work and reach more families in the Bristol area.”

– Tim Trythall, Bristol Coordinator for The Wave Project

people



A SCOUT TAKEOVER

Encouraging a more diverse audience of people to come and try surfing is the core driver of the 'Waves of Change' strand of our impact work. This is why we were delighted to work with the Bristol First Muslim Scout and Cub Group to run a 'Play in the Bay' takeover in June 2023, welcoming in 60 children and parents for an ocean-like experience.

"My daughter and a few other girls borrowed a waterproof hijab – and she mentioned there were also full body swimsuits available. Everybody was so accommodating, welcoming and accepting of our need to cover up – definitely making surfing accessible to all."

– Feedback from parent of participant

WAVE WOMEN UK PREMIERE

Wave Women UK is a documentary by Ubuntu Productions, which follows a group of black women learning to surf. We hosted the UK premiere of the film, as part of a day aimed at inspiring more women from BAME backgrounds to try surfing for the first time. Around 40 women took part in the incredible event, which included beginner surfing lessons, the film screening, panel Q&A and a DJ who created a brilliant atmosphere throughout!



"This empowering gathering not only celebrated the film, but also provided an opportunity for future wave chasers to discover their passion."

– Bola Adeosun, Founder and Creative Director, Ubuntu Productions

planet

We consider the environmental implications of the decisions we make. We aren't perfect but we are striving to not only minimise any negative impact on the environment, but where possible seeking to have a positive one.



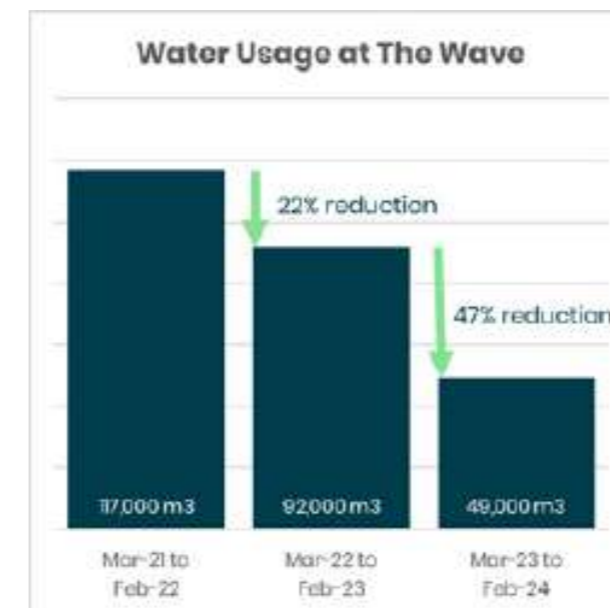
SUNSHINE POWERED WAVES

We've already generated 262mwh to The Wave, and generated 285mwh to the grid!

In July 2023, we celebrated the connection of our site to our solar array. The £3.2million project has now concluded and our solar field array sits proudly to the right of the driveway which takes customers from our car park to The Wave, an ever-present reminder of our environmental sustainability goals. In addition to this, we are home to a clever solar 'Smartflower', which acts as an engaging renewable energy educational tool for visitors and school visits. Our solar array produces more energy than we use every year - making us Net Zero Carbon in terms of our operational energy.

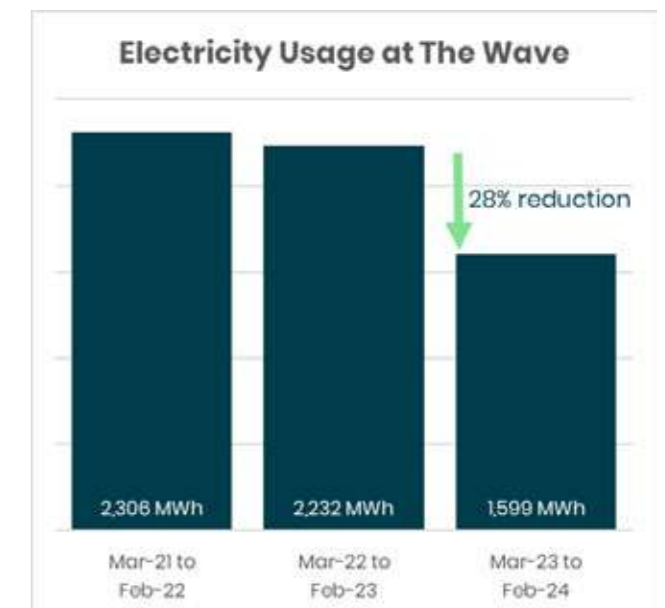
In true Wave style, the switch over coincided with the 'Running Out of Time' climate relay which visited The Wave on the baton's journey from Ben Nevis to Big Ben. It was safely paddled into our lake where it was surfed back to the shore by Welsh surfing champion, Emily Williams.

We are incredibly grateful to the support of South Gloucestershire Council, and funding from the European Regional Development Fund for helping to make our solar array plans a reality.



SAVING WATER

The Wave depends on water. Without it there are no waves. However, we can strive to use it sparingly and responsibly and a number of water-saving methods identified in 2023 further reduced the water consumption of 2022. The graph here clearly demonstrates the impact we have made on reducing water usage.



SAVING ELECTRICITY

Similar ambitions exist in energy usage and while we use energy created by renewable technologies (including our solar array), we should still be striving to reduce our overall consumption. Again, the graph shows the year-on-year success in 2023.

planet



WASTE NOT!

Reducing and managing our waste continued to be a focus in 2023. We work with waste management company, Binit, who regularly educate us on our waste footprint, managing waste effectively and introducing new and innovative bin solutions that aid customers in their recycling of waste in our restaurant. Bin signage and customer education is critical and in 2023 we reviewed our bin locations and clear messaging on what can enter which bin to maximise what can be recycled.

EVERYONE DOING THEIR BIT

As part of the business strategy planning in early 2024, the senior leadership team was tasked with demonstrating our commitment to our planet. Each department has identified ways in which their team can reduce energy usage, waste, water usage, damage to our landscape and our carbon footprint. These may only be small incremental contributions, but collectively as a business it will create real power to continually improve our environmental sustainability. In addition to this, senior leaders carry environmental goals within their annual targets.

THE WETSUIT CHALLENGE

As highlighted in our 2022 impact report, The Big Sea - an investigative documentary exposing surfing's hidden links to Cancer Alley and the wetsuit world's toxic addiction to Neoprene - turned a spotlight on wetsuits for us and others in the surf industry. Since then, many wetsuit companies have demonstrated their commitment to finding less harmful wetsuit solutions. As Europe's biggest surf school we are acutely aware of the environmental and human impact the volume of wetsuits we require is having. So, what are we doing about it?

Firstly, it's critical that the lives of existing neoprene wetsuits are prolonged. When damage occurs to our suits, we work with Rip Curl to have them repaired rather than replaced - and when they reach the end of their life with us, but are still in good enough condition, they are sold second-hand for other surfers to maximise their life span. In 2023, for the suits that we did have to get rid of, we worked with Circular Flow to deliver over 3,000 kilogrammes of wetsuits to be recycled into other products such as yoga mats, pencil cases or backpacks.

Secondly, we continue to work with partners to design and develop a truly sustainable suit, that meets the demands of being worn 12 or more times per week in our surf school.

A BIODIVERSE SITE

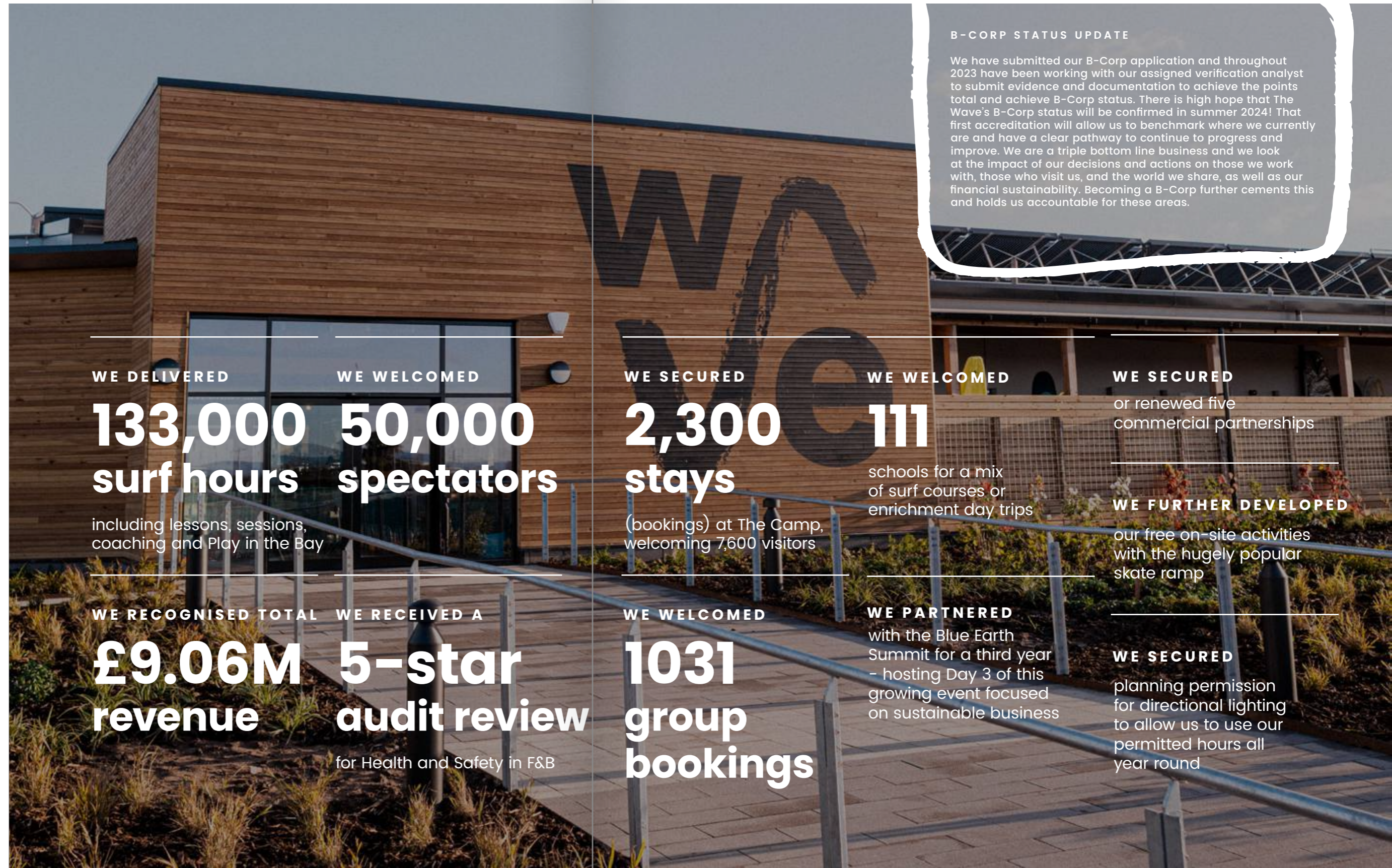
We planted 4000 trees in 2023. As well as this we continued to nurture our honey bee hives, creating and selling honey as part of our retail offering again in 2023.



profit

Our 3-Wave approach to business takes into account our social, environmental and financial impact.

We need to be commercially successful and financially sustainable to repay the investors who helped build our amazing facilities, allowing us to deliver a great blue health experience for our visitors and work towards our purpose of nurturing a world of hope, health and happiness.



B-CORP STATUS UPDATE

We have submitted our B-Corp application and throughout 2023 have been working with our assigned verification analyst to submit evidence and documentation to achieve the points total and achieve B-Corp status. There is high hope that The Wave's B-Corp status will be confirmed in summer 2024! That first accreditation will allow us to benchmark where we currently are and have a clear pathway to continue to progress and improve. We are a triple bottom line business and we look at the impact of our decisions and actions on those we work with, those who visit us, and the world we share, as well as our financial sustainability. Becoming a B-Corp further cements this and holds us accountable for these areas.

WE DELIVERED

133,000
surf hours

including lessons, sessions, coaching and Play in the Bay

WE WELCOMED

50,000
spectators

WE SECURED

2,300
stays

(bookings) at The Camp, welcoming 7,600 visitors

WE WELCOMED

111

schools for a mix of surf courses or enrichment day trips

WE SECURED

or renewed five commercial partnerships

WE FURTHER DEVELOPED

our free on-site activities with the hugely popular skate ramp

WE RECOGNISED TOTAL

£9.06M
revenue

WE RECEIVED A

5-star
audit review

for Health and Safety in F&B

WE WELCOMED

1031
group bookings

WE PARTNERED

with the Blue Earth Summit for a third year - hosting Day 3 of this growing event focused on sustainable business

WE SECURED

planning permission for directional lighting to allow us to use our permitted hours all year round

profit



"Our planning permission allows us to operate from 7am to 9pm, but the reality is that for much of the year we can't run all of these sessions as we lose the daylight. We know there is demand for pre and post-work surfs and we would also love to be able to run more options for children after-school, particularly in the autumn months, but until now this hasn't been possible. Our impact work has also been constrained by the inability to work with some of these groups in the evenings. Being able to light the lake will open up opportunities for so many more people to learn to surf – and to progress on their surfing journey – throughout the year."

– Hazel Geary, The Wave CEO

SURFING AFTER DARK IS COMING

An extensive consultation and planning process with the local community concluded in 2023, enabling us to install directional lighting that will mean we can operate to 9pm all year round without light being an inhibiting factor. Planning ensured that the lighting would be no risk to the environment of the site, nor would it be a challenge for our most local village residents. Using the lights is a relatively low energy cost, but the chance to make surfing accessible to more people in the months where we lose daylight is a brilliant result commercially and from a customer experience perspective.

EXPANSION

Work continued in 2023 to grow The Wave to new sites, in a responsible and sustainable way. As with all our decision-making, this has meant considering any impact on people, planet and profit. From the very beginning we establish two-way conversations with local councils, land owners, ecologists and many other stakeholders, in order to work in a collaborative way. And we are applying everything we have learnt on our journey to build and operate our site in Bristol.



02



over

the

falls

our

challenges

We have had challenges in 2023 and there are areas where we know we could do more or better.

challenges

In fact some of these challenges are the same ones that we have highlighted in our last two impact reports – and we need to acknowledge that they are taking more time than we hoped to overcome. They remain a feature of where we can do better for a third year in a row. But recognising slow progress and retaining the goal in the knowledge that it will be better for people, profit and planet in the future is important.

PARA SURFING BOOKING PROCESS

We know there is more work to be done to make booking quicker and easier for para surfers. As para-surfing continues to pursue paralympic sport status, the visibility and appeal of the sport is increasing and so it's important that we can cater for people with disabilities who want to surf. The additional training we have been able to implement has created a bigger bank of qualified in-water supporters and para surfing trained coaches – which we believe will help dramatically in 2024. We will continue to review processes and consult our para-surfing community to ensure we are always striving to develop and improve the experience we offer.

FEMALE SURF COACHES

We did not make major headway in recruiting or training a larger number of female surf coaches in 2023. However, we have created a pathway to firstly qualify more female lifeguards with the aim that they can then be encouraged to progress to surf coach training.

DIVERSE WAVEMAKERS

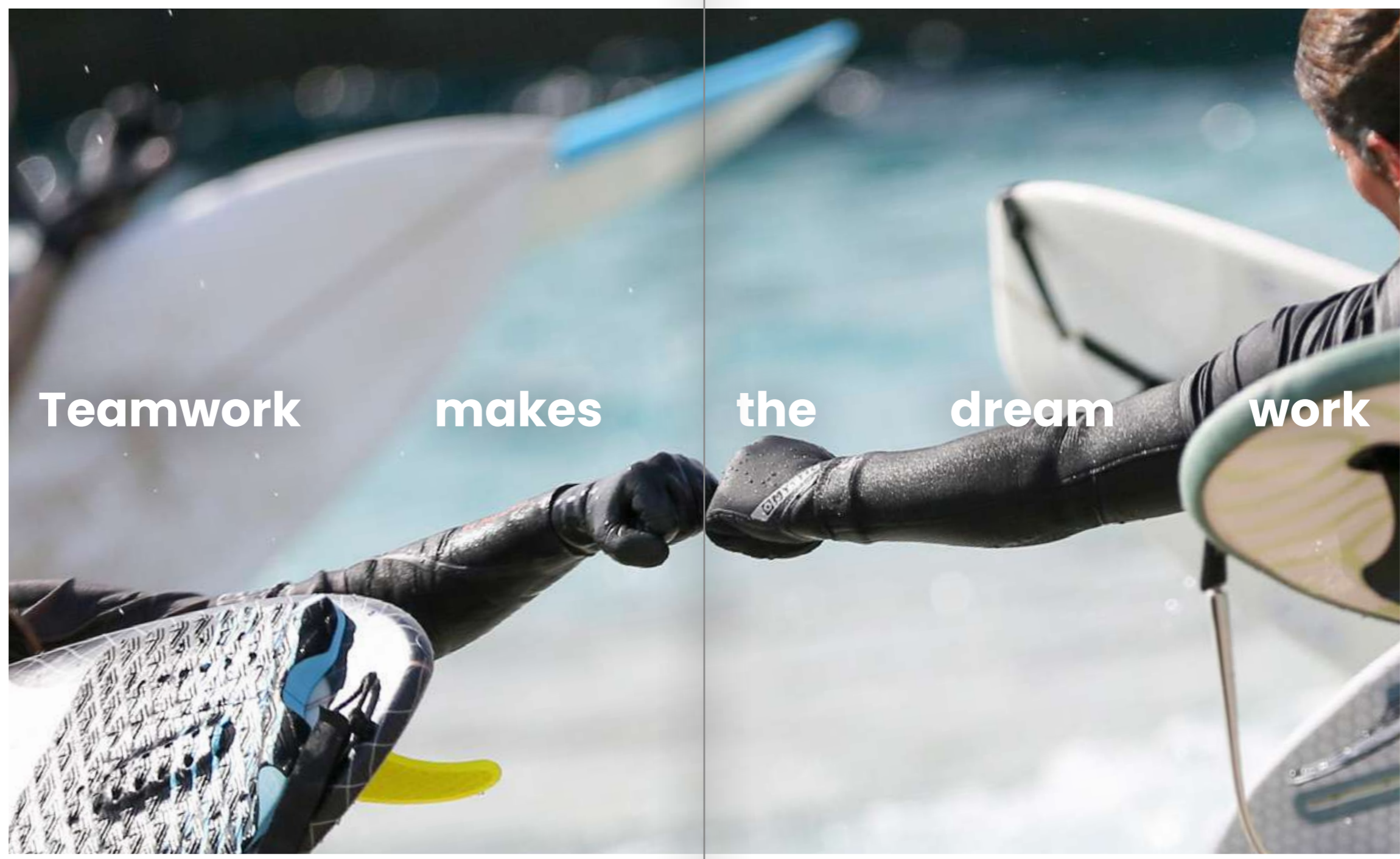
We continue with a workforce that is not representative of the ethnic diversity in our area. We are confident that our ED&I strategy will enable growth in this area in 2024 and 2025.

TRANSPORT

The conversations continue with South Gloucestershire Council, West of England Combined Authorities and other major employers in the area to work together on longer term solutions that make The Wave accessible by public transport. The catalyst to this may be future housing developments in the area, which are in planning phases currently or which could form part of the South Gloucestershire Local Plan, currently under development and consultation.



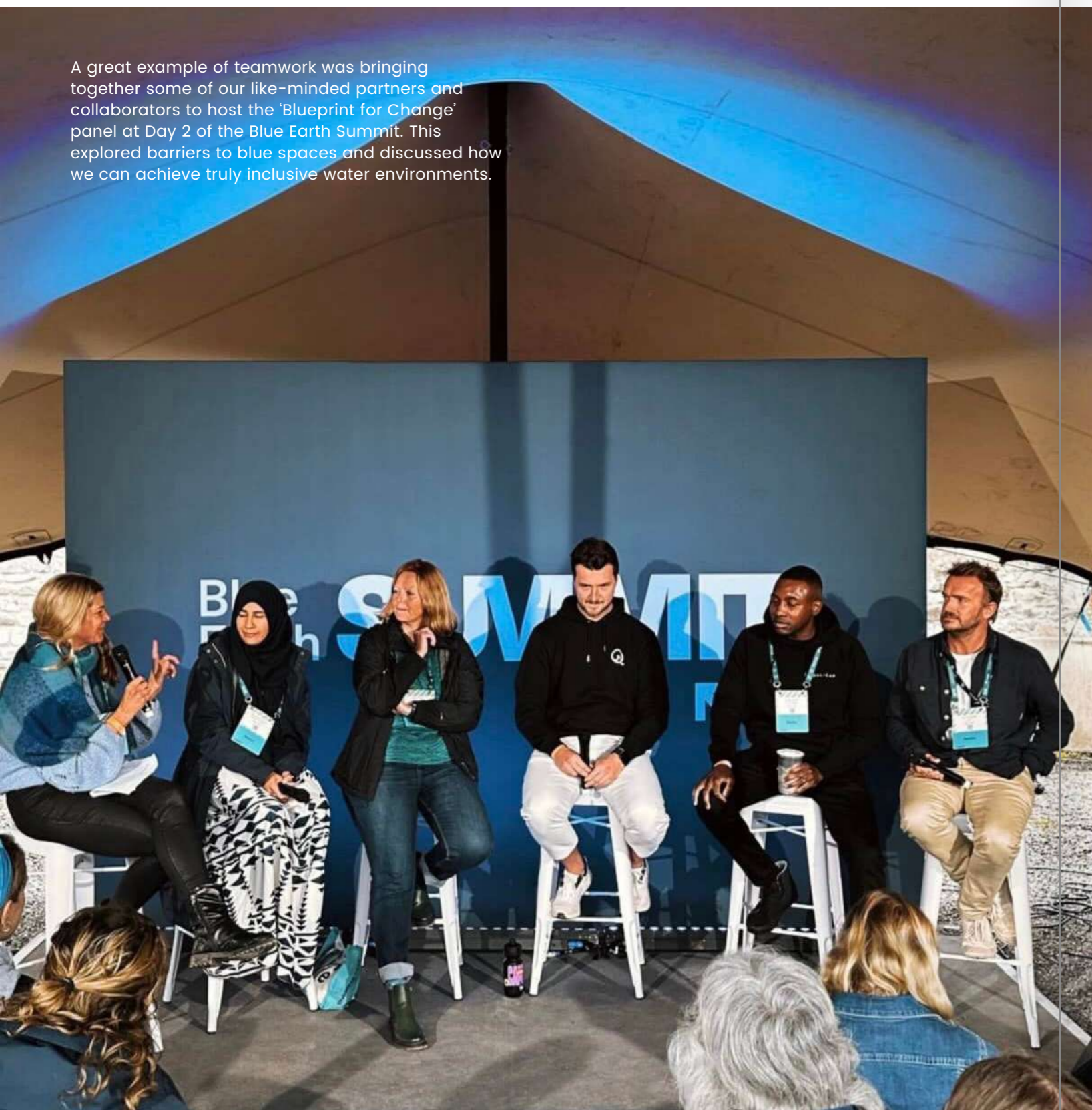
03



We know we are stronger when we work with others. Collaboration continued to be key for us in 2023 and showed how businesses can be a force for good, especially when they work together.

the power of partnerships

A great example of teamwork was bringing together some of our like-minded partners and collaborators to host the 'Blueprint for Change' panel at Day 2 of the Blue Earth Summit. This explored barriers to blue spaces and discussed how we can achieve truly inclusive water environments.



In 2023 we worked with liked-minded businesses, charities, groups and organisations to make more impact. This covered a wide range of elements, from raising funds for social impact surf courses, enabling research and hosting events, to understanding the needs of more diverse groups, supporting the UK's emerging surfing talent, and working in partnership to tackle barriers to blue space.

Thank you all – here's to more in 2024!



04



We have set some ambitious targets for this year...

our goals

We have started 2024 with a renewed clarity on what is important for the business right now. That is primarily making

sure that The Wave Bristol is a resounding success on all levels. This will make the opportunities for roll-out much easier.



BECOME A B-CORP

Expecting accreditation by end of Summer 2024. Once there is a decision, opportunities to improve The Wave's score within the B-Corp framework will be pursued.



DO MORE!

Enable 2,000+ surfs via our social impact programme.



THINK ENERGY

Embed energy saving practices throughout our staff



TACKLE THE NEOPRENE ISSUE

Ensure that any wetsuit partner that we work with has sustainability engrained in their product development and committed to environmentally friendly materials in their suits.



PLANT MORE TREES

Work with corporate partners to increase the number of trees planted across our site



IMPROVE WAVEMAKER DIVERSITY

Complete and communicate The Wave's EDI strategy which recognises and implements ways we can diversify our workforce and better represent the local area



EVALUATE OUR IMPACT AND SUPPORT RESEARCH

Partnering with the University of Bristol to deliver a PhD that explores how and why surfing impacts our mental well-being,



REDUCE OUR CARBON FOOTPRINT

Work with partners to effectively baseline and record our CO2 emissions. Once sources of emissions are understood, a reduction plan can be developed.

2024 BUSINESS FOCUSES:

- Experience
- Audience
- Utilisation
- Events
- Community
- Culture



“You don’t realise how much stress you’re having until you stop that stress and you’re like ‘Wow, that was a lot of stress’. It’s like I took out my brain, plopped it in a corner and got a new brain. Surfing takes my mind off everything.”

- Seb Campbell-Aldridge, 13, Wave Project participant



For more information or to enquire about supporting our social impact programmes contact hello@thewave.com

www.thewave.com