

# IMPACT REPORT 2023-24



## Trainspotters

Vintage & Bespoke Lighting





# Contents

Welcome

Leadership Letter

Journey to Certification

Verified Score

Impact Progress

The next 2 yrs.

# Welcome!

Architectural salvage is the birthplace of our business. Back in the late 90s and early 00s we were travelling near and far, clearing old factories of their industrial treasures, some of them lights and some of them objects that we knew would find love again. All the time we were saving them from the scrap heap, or worse landfill, and breathing new life into them.

The nature of salvage means, it's just what's there - you can't ask for more and when it's gone it's gone. But on some of those trips we'd find a real gem - an "absolute belter" as Jesse likes to say and we just knew the design would stand the test of time - we knew it in our bones. So over time we realised there was a definite place for reproducing those special finds, particularly when it came lighting.

Reproduction has always been a bit of a dirty word and at the time, reproduction lighting was overpriced and pretty tacky. The market was awash with cheap Victoriana chandeliers and flimsy wall sconces and well, not much else really. So in 2008 thereabouts, when we produced our first remake The Dunlop, we were kind of trailblazing by bringing new design-led, robust, industrial lights back to the market.

Trainspotters Classics was born – lights that were built to last generations. No trends, no frills and certainly no seasonal collections. This was lighting for the long haul.

As exciting as those early days were, salvaging and producing side-by-side, we never got carried away. Sure, we moved at lightening speeds back then, but we were always careful and considered and that was across the whole business, plus we always stayed true to the originals. Our ethos of buy-once-buy-well has underpinned our business right from the start – delivering exceptional quality classic remakes alongside vintage salvage industrial lighting, which is inherently beneficial.

Our attitude to business, from the bare bones of the old mill that we restored over many years, through to the coffee we buy and the colleagues we recruit, we have always strived to be thoughtful – we have never underestimated the impact our decisions would have on the business, our people, our environment and our community.

In 2021 we decided we wanted to do something to galvanise this way of doing 'better business' and it was through the B Corp mechanism that in 2023 we were able to achieve this world renowned, well-respected and contemporary certification.

# Leadership Letter

I'm proud to introduce this, our first impact report.

In fact, I'm really proud of it all. I've been doing this for over 20 years and it still excites me, I'm pretty lucky for that and to achieve BCorp certification last year was the cherry on the top. Although I can't quite believe it's been a year already!

I don't think many people realise how compact a business we are. We've pushed ourselves and worked so hard since starting the business in 2005, achieving some amazing projects (that when we first started, could never have imagined), we send our lighting all around the world, we supply to some of the biggest household brands and we are working with some of the top names in the ever-expanding hospitality sector; all of this with a team of four people. It's something to be really proud of - our efficiency, our productivity and our integrity.

Nobody would argue that we're in tough times - the last 4 years have been turbulent to say the least. A world-changing pandemic, massive political upheavals, wars of attrition and tragedy, and huge economic crises, but we're not afraid of a challenge and we're still here! To have also achieved B Corp certification through all of this, whilst keeping the business on track is something we should probably pat ourselves on the back for more often.





In such challenging times, we accept there is a balance between doing what we want to do and doing what we can do.

We are a lean mean machine where each and every person on our team is highly valued and really matter to the business. Our sights remain firmly fixed on our commitments to people, planet, profit and we look forward to building on the B Corp blocks already in place. We may not take the path we originally set out on but aren't spontaneous detours always more exciting?!

Thanks for your time and do read on to discover more about our journey to certification, our progress and the direction we'd like to head in over the next few years.

*Jesse*

Jesse Carrington, Founder & Director



# Journey to Certification

**We first heard about B Corp in 2019** from a fellow Stroud-based micro business, just certified themselves and who encouraged us to consider it for Trainspotters...



**2019**

We dipped our toes into the process that same year, beginning the bare bones of the Impact Assessment process. Then the COVID pandemic hit and lockdowns began...



**2019-20**

Throughout 2019 and part of 2020 our business shifted to remote working and limited on-site activities reflected in the sharp change in sales. We started the long climb back from the devastating impact of COVID in 2020...



**2021-22**

In '21 we recruited a new colleague - their role included a clear remit for B Corp with 50% of their role dedicated to Impact Assessment. Once completed we joined the waiting line at UK B Lab which post-pandemic meant a longer than usual wait...



**2022-23**

In May 2023 we finally received the good news we'd been hoping for, achieving B Corp certification and a very respectable score.

## What it means to us:

Being B Corp means we have an ever-present benchmarking tool with which we can filter our decision-making to ensure benefit to people, planet and profit. These checks and measures drive us to go that little bit extra – to consider the economical implications as well as the wider effects of our actions on all stakeholders.

It encourages us to be more self-reflective. We have revisited our roots and invested in more salvage lighting than in previous years. Alongside this we have reviewed and refined our Classic Remakes, streamlining the range and ensuring best quality components and sensible stock levels.

In other areas of our business, we've increased benefits to employees, and we are encouraging more community engagement and giving.



# Verified Score:

Median Company Score

50.9

B Corp Requirement

80.0

Trainspotters Overall Score

90.6

Aspirational Score

93.0

14.6

Governance

21.5

Workers

27.4

Community

23.1

Environment

3.8

Customers



# Governance

## Success Stories So Far:

### Trainspotters is Mission Locked

In 2021 we amended our Articles of Association at Companies House. B Lab UK refers to this corporate governance as Stakeholder Governance. When a company legally commits itself to stakeholder governance, they are “Mission Locked”.

Mission-led businesses are those whose financial objectives are accompanied by a commitment to have a positive moral, social, and/ or environmental impact.

The vast majority of for-profit companies are structured to do the exact opposite.

### Advisory Board

In 2022 Trainspotters formed an Advisory Board.

The board consists of a Director, a Member of Staff and an Independent Member not employed in The Company.

The Advisory Board meets regularly (around once per quarter) and its purpose is to review all aspects of the business ensuring that all decisions or actions follow best practice and are aligned with our core principles of being a B Corp.

We are really lucky to have Scott Johnson on our Advisory Board. Being a very early certified B Corp and the UK’s first B Corp Accountant, Scott offers a completely independent insight and brings a wealth of experience to the proceedings; as well as being simply, one of life’s good people!

**The B Corp Certification legal requirement means that a company must change their fiduciary duties to become legally accountable not just to shareholders, but all stakeholders including customers, employees, suppliers, communities, and the environment.**

# Workers

## Success Stories So Far:

- Continued to pay the UK living wage to all employees, increasing salaries for everyone by 5% in 2022 and again in 2023
- In 2020 we introduced a 36-hour working week, closing 13:00 on Fridays – this half day extra personal time is much cherished by everyone on the team
- Continued to offer flexible working hours i.e. early birds can start from 8am and leave from 4pm, whereas sleepy heads can start at 9am and leave at 5pm
- We continue to pay for hours worked outside of the above 36-hours either as overtime or time in lieu as chosen by the employee
- We have remained committed to staff bonuses throughout the post pandemic recovery period – this is at 0.5% of turnover (not profit) and goes to each member of staff
- Introduced *Trainspotters Breakfast Club* which started with free toast and cereal from our open kitchen and has since adapted to include meal essentials such as bread, cheese, butter, eggs and condiments, alongside the usual hot drinks supplies. All produce is organic and/ or fair trade with most items supplied on a weekly basis from Riverford. This ensures that anyone who is either hungry or has missed a meal can eat nutritious food not just at breakfast but throughout the day
- Encouraged all employees to transfer to NEST's ethical pension option

## Next two years...

- Continue expanding/ adapting food offering, changing seasonally if required and adapting to the changing needs of the team
- To achieve a greater sense of investment and involvement for all staff in the “bigger picture” of running a business, by encouraging collaborative problem solving, research and development and autonomy in introducing new methods and systems that deliver best practice and optimum efficiency

**“One of the benefits of being in a small team is that all responsibilities are shared – everyone has the opportunity to learn other aspects of the business outside their standard role. Each person in the team is a crucial cog in the Trainspotters wheel, where transparency is at the heart of all activities. There are many examples of this over the years but more recently, staff have contributed really positively to improving our environmental impact, actively sourcing and re-designing packaging to help reduce breakages and sourcing new products to eliminate plastics from our business”**  
Poppy, Office Manager

# Community

## Success Stories So Far:

We are fortunate in many ways; specifically, we are based in a stunning part of the world, in the South Cotswold town of Stroud situated along the Slad Valley. We are based out of a beautiful old mill which we painstakingly and lovingly restored back in the early noughties. We have our showroom, office and warehousing here which is a roomy and characterful space which we like to actively shared with our wider community to take full advantage of its benefits. Activities over recent years include:

- Yard Trail: car park and premises used as a Super Yard by the annual community yard sale event, with provision of food vans, a pop-up pub and Portaloos
- Thursdays: forecourt (and in inclement weather our enclosed loading bay) used by local food vendors and coffee vans
- Monthly Lunch: kitchen facilities and showroom dining space used for the monthly co-working lunch where people share cooking and eat communally
- Other spaces: additional co-working office space, 'floating' meeting rooms and space for the community caravan used for interviews by local newspaper; photographic booth and workshops used by local businesses, artists and creators
- Festive: providing annual Libby's Drive Christmas Tree
- Culture & Education: Hosting short film release to highlight Refugee Week; showroom and warehousing used by local theatre group for rehearsals and as a location for filming

## Next two years...

- To become a drop-off location for local B Corp Farm for veg and meat boxes
- Host a local B Glos Initiative meeting or other Better Business gathering
- Co-host charity film nights, assisting with vegan/ veggie catering
- Divide the mill further, offering extra space for local enterprises
- Grow Weekly community van offerings on Thursdays

**Community is at the heart of Trainspotters. Whether we're working with our salvage contacts across Europe or suppliers down the road, opening our doors on Thursday mornings for our local food vans or handing over our premises to the local theatre group for rehearsals, we realise that a rich, vibrant and energetic community is what makes our working lives better.**

**Community is an area of much focus for us over the coming months and years - we want to grow these relationships and build on the local buzz that has developed at Libbys Drive. Thank you to our fellow small businesses down here, including Spacehoppers Co-working, Dapple Studio, Kung Fu Accounting, The Natural Dispensary, Salt Bakehouse and Good Small Farms, for their commitment to the collective cause.**

Jesse, Director

# Environment

## Success Stories So Far:

- During our B Corp assessment period we opted to commission a carbon foot-printing exercise to fully understand our carbon impact and to provide benchmarking for future activities and reporting
- We installed two EV charging-points for use by Trainspotters and also as a complimentary service for customers visiting the showroom as well as Spacehopper co-workers based at New Mills
- We replaced one of our company vehicles with a Hybrid vehicle. This is used for local journeys and for smaller deliveries to further afield locations, therefore it runs on electric for approx. 90% of the working year
- We researched and met with a solar co-operative organisation regarding the installation of a solar array on the mill to generate own energy

## Next two years...

- We will continue to encourage more car-sharing, walking or cycling to work especially for those colleagues who live nearby or on the route to work
- We would love to utilise the excellent facilities and space that New Mills has to offer – see 'Community' for more ideas on this
- Continue to review utilities contracts to ensure renewables take priority
- We would still love to achieve our long-term goal of installing a solar array on the roof to be able to generate our own energy

Alongside support to The Ukraine and product donations to local organisations, we're proud to support Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust's 'Project Beaver'.

Project Beaver aims to reintroduce Beavers back into the wild within the next 5-10 years in our local area. These animals are vital eco-engineers, naturally controlling the flow of water in areas like The Five Valleys to reduce flood risk and other negative environmental impacts relating to waterways.



# Customers

## Success Stories So Far:

Here are just a few of the recent comments we have received about our products and services...

We are very proud of our average Trustpilot Score of 4.7 out of 5. With 96% of our reviews graded 5 out of 5 stars and 4% graded 4 out of 5 stars. We always strive to provide a premium experience to each and every customer.

Trainspotters have zero reviews under a 4 out of 5-star rating.

## Next two years...

We are looking forward to increasing the purchase levels of salvaged goods. Expanding the vintage range of products on offer (from salvage) so that customers have an even greater opportunity to make lower environmental-impact purchases

**“Fantastic quality product. Easy online purchasing process, quick and efficient delivery service. A reassuringly quality and service-oriented retailer. Wholeheartedly recommend”**

Simon

**“Excellent products and service. Couldn’t be happier with our lights ... came quickly and well packaged. I like the ethical/charity side of the business that some of the purchase price goes towards too.”**

Brook

**“Everything - second visit and a perfect transaction - beautiful lights, well packaged!”**

Robbie

# Trainspotters

Vintage & Bespoke Lighting

w: [trainspotters.co.uk](https://trainspotters.co.uk)

e: [info@trainspotters.co.uk](mailto:info@trainspotters.co.uk)

+44 (0)1453 756677

Unit 3-4 New Mills, Libbys Drive, Stroud, GL5 1RN, UK

IMPACT  
REPORT  
2023-24



WE BELIEVE IN A  
BETTER WAY OF  
DOING BUSINESS

