



ESG Report 2023

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Our mission is that
every investment
we make will have
a positive impact



Foreword

With over ten years' experience in driving positive change and creating value through ESG performance, we are continually seeking ways to evolve and challenge ourselves to keep building on the foundations we set in motion from our beginnings. We do this because it's the right thing to do, but also because we know it makes businesses more valuable for all of our stakeholders.

One of the ways we achieve this is through our ESG report, now in its fourth year of publication. Within this report, we share our highlights and key insights from 2023; the progress being made across our portfolio; how ESG links to value creation; and our plans for the future to support our goals and encourage our portfolio, our peers and the wider community to focus on sustainable growth.

During 2023 we released our fourth TCFD report and published our first SFDR-aligned Principal Adverse Impact Report. In July, we released our Net Zero Plan, providing a transparent view of our carbon footprint and our targets to help reduce our emissions over time. Given our role as investors, we recognise we are uniquely positioned to drive material change and support the achievement of a net zero economy. Demonstrating transparency through our annual reporting allows us to influence and encourage our portfolio and network to do the same, working together to mitigate climate-risks and embrace climate-opportunities.

Whilst we take our commitments to climate very seriously, given the nature of our portfolio companies and our business model we primarily focus our efforts on the Social and Governance aspects of ESG. For the first time we have published our materiality matrix, detailed on page 10 in this report, to highlight how we prioritise ESG progress relative to risk, opportunity & stakeholder requirements.

Our biggest focus for 2023 has been quantifying the economic and social value that NorthEdge contributes to the UK economy from the UK regions. As regionally-headquartered investors, to date 90% of our capital has been deployed in the UK regions outside of London & the South East. The majority of the people employed across the portfolio are based in the UK regions and, as a result of our investment and active ownership approach, our portfolio companies are more productive than average, pay higher wages than average and have a smaller gender pay gap. We commissioned business economist Mark Gregory to undertake an independent review of our economic and social impact, detailed on page 29 of this report, which shows that in 2023 the activities of NorthEdge and our portfolio generated £844m of Gross Value Added in the UK.

We couldn't achieve this performance without the continued efforts from our portfolio. Their focus on building better businesses over the last 12 months has seen the number of companies committing to net zero increase; the number of companies undertaking colleague engagement surveys increase; every company reporting against Scope 1, 2 & 3 carbon emissions; stability in gender diversity at a board level; and an improved reporting profile for material ESG factors.

Foreword

As well as our portfolio, we're also proud of the impact we can have on our industry and our communities. In 2023 we organised and participated in numerous events and activities throughout the year for organisations and charities including Yorkshire Children's Charity, Smart Works, National Brain Appeal & Andy's Man Club. As a result of our collective efforts, we raised and donated c.£130,000 for a number of incredible charities in 2023. We were also invited to join the BVCA's Responsible Investment Advisory Group, allowing us to use our voice to shape the future of ESG risks and opportunities in the Private Capital industry.

Following another year of strong progress, I was also delighted to see NorthEdge receive several awards throughout the year in recognition for our team's dedication and hard work towards our ESG performance. Highlights included being named a top performer in the Orbis Advisory PE ESG Transparency Index and taking home the Real Deals Private Equity Award for the 'ESG – GP' category, alongside achieving our best PRI scores. It's fantastic recognition and serves to highlight our continued commitment to responsible investing, transparent reporting and ensuring every investment we make has a positive impact.



Despite this progress, we're not done. During 2024 we're focussing on achieving 100% portfolio alignment with net zero⁽¹⁾; embedding third-party ESG DD into our investment process to improve our assessment of materiality, risk and opportunity; continuing to invest in the UK regions providing growth opportunities for businesses and founders; and ensuring NorthEdge continues to set the best example for our people and portfolio. We're also committed to continuing to use our voice to shape the future of our industry as we focus on **building better businesses, together.**

Lucie Mills, Partner – Value Creation & ESG

⁽¹⁾For companies we invested in prior to 2023. Companies receiving investment from 1 January 2023 have a completion target of two years from the date of investment

NorthEdge in Numbers

- Overview
- Environmental
- Social
- Governance

£900m
AUM

4.5
Glassdoor score

94%

of our colleagues say they
would speak highly of
NorthEdge without being asked

6%

reduction in carbon intensity
(tCO₂e per FTE)

9%

decrease on emissions
from 2022 footprint

26

year track record of
investing

4

regionally focussed Funds
raised since 2012

+52

Employee Net
Promoter Score

31%
female
colleagues

240.7

tCO₂e Scope 1, 2 and
operational Scope 3
emissions



Released
Net Zero Plan

35

employees across
two offices

**Signatories
to...**

PRI Principles for
Responsible
Investment
achieved
5* / 5 / 4* ratings

3

portfolio forums
hosted

9%

ethnic minority colleagues

c.£130,000
donated and raised for
charity in 2023

5

mental health
first aiders



**ESG Data
Convergence
Initiative**



Released
first Principal Adverse
Impact Report



TCFD

TASK FORCE ON
CLIMATE-RELATED
FINANCIAL
DISCLOSURES



Our Portfolio in Numbers

Overview Environmental Social Governance



Note: Data is based on companies where NorthEdge is the lead investor. Only companies where NorthEdge invested before 31 December 2023 have completed the 2023 survey which reflects 1 January 2023 - 31 December 2023. The data above excludes companies that exited the portfolio before the 2023 reporting period deadline (15 March 2024). Only the number of portfolio companies includes companies where we are not the lead investor but retain a meaningful investment (>15% equity) as at 31 December 2023.

Our Values

I think NorthEdge's values are pervasive across the workforce and therefore this does help make us good people to work with

Our values provide us with a strong framework around which all decisions can be made and helps ensure we are all aligned

The organisational culture on the whole is fantastic and I think captures a desire to succeed, succeed in 'the right way', support each other and our portfolio companies

Our values underpin everything we do, as employers, investors and colleagues.

They are our cultural compass and help us to build businesses and relationships we are all proud to be a part of.



Respect



Integrity



Ownership



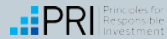
Responsibility

However, values can only be demonstrated through behaviours - we're really proud of ours...

- ▶ **We take ownership.** We're all aligned by the same goals – NorthEdge is a team effort
- ▶ **We are each other's biggest fans.** We respect and support everyone we work with
- ▶ **We do the right thing.** We take our responsibilities as investors and employers seriously
- ▶ **We are partners.** We discuss rather than tell
- ▶ **We are authentic.** Because we act with integrity
- ▶ **We embrace diversity.** It's what gives us our edge
- ▶ **We are ambitious.** We like to challenge the status quo to create great businesses
- ▶ **We're constantly learning.** Then we share what we've learned to keep us all growing
- ▶ **We ask 'What if?'** We like to try new things and we're not afraid to fail

We are NorthEdge.

Our Track Record of Responsible Investing



NorthEdge Fund I first close
Became a signatory to the PRI (Principles of Responsible Investing)



BVCA Responsible Investment Awards **winner**: ESG Engagement with Portfolio Companies - firms with less than £1bn under management



BVCA Responsible Investment Awards **winner**: Portfolio Company Award for Future Industrial Services
Annual colleague survey launched



Signatory to the TCFD & first report issued
Founding signatory to UK Chapter of Initiative Climat International (iCI)
Early signatory to 10,000 Black Interns programme
Appointed Cyber and Information Security DD & Portfolio Monitoring partners
Real Deals Future 40 Diversity & Inclusion Leaders: Nicola McQuaid
PRI - AA+ rating



Real Deals ESG Awards **winner**: ESG (Small Cap)
ESG Transparency PE Index 2021: **Achieved 4th place overall**
Women in Investment Awards **Highly Commended**: Lucie Mills
BVCA Excellence in ESG **Special Recognition**: GP (below £1bn AUM)
ESG Data Convergence Initiative signatory in inaugural reporting year
ESG reporting integrated into portfolio monitoring platform
SFDR (Article 8) alignment
First portfolio ESG Forum
Raised and donated £57k for charities

2012 2014 2016 2017 2018 2019 2020 2021 2022 2023

Annual Portfolio ESG Survey launched
Responsible Investment Policy launched
BVCA Responsible Investment Awards **winner**: Demonstration of an ESG framework at firm level



Appointed to BVCA Responsible Investment Advisory Group (2017-2021)



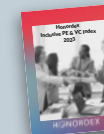
Appointed Chair of BVCA Responsible Investment Advisory Group (2019-2021)
Carbon Neutral on Scope 1 and Scope 2 basis



First annual ESG Report published
ESG Committee established
Carbon Neutral on Scope 1, Scope 2 and operational Scope 3 basis
One of the first private equity firms to sign the Mindful Employer Charter
Midlands Dealmakers Awards **winner**: Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)
Launched Nexus, an online community for the company's portfolio which shares exclusive learnings and best practices
Raised and donated £50k to charities



World's first PE Gold Carbon Literate Organisation
Real Deals Private Equity Awards **winner**: ESG – GP Award
Honordex PE & VC DEI Awards **winner**: Most Improved Fund & 6th place overall
Real Deals ESG Awards **winner**: Lower-mid-cap House of the Year
BVCA Excellence in ESG **Special Recognition**: GP (below £1bn AUM)
ESG Transparency PE Index 2023: **Achieved 4th place overall**
Yorkshire Rainmakers Individual Changemaker **winner**: Nicola McQuaid
Net Zero plan published
First Principal Adverse Impact Report published (SFDR) (Voluntary basis)
Appointed to BVCA Responsible Investment Advisory Group (RIAG)
PRI – 5*/5*/4* rating
Raised and donated c.£130,000 for charities



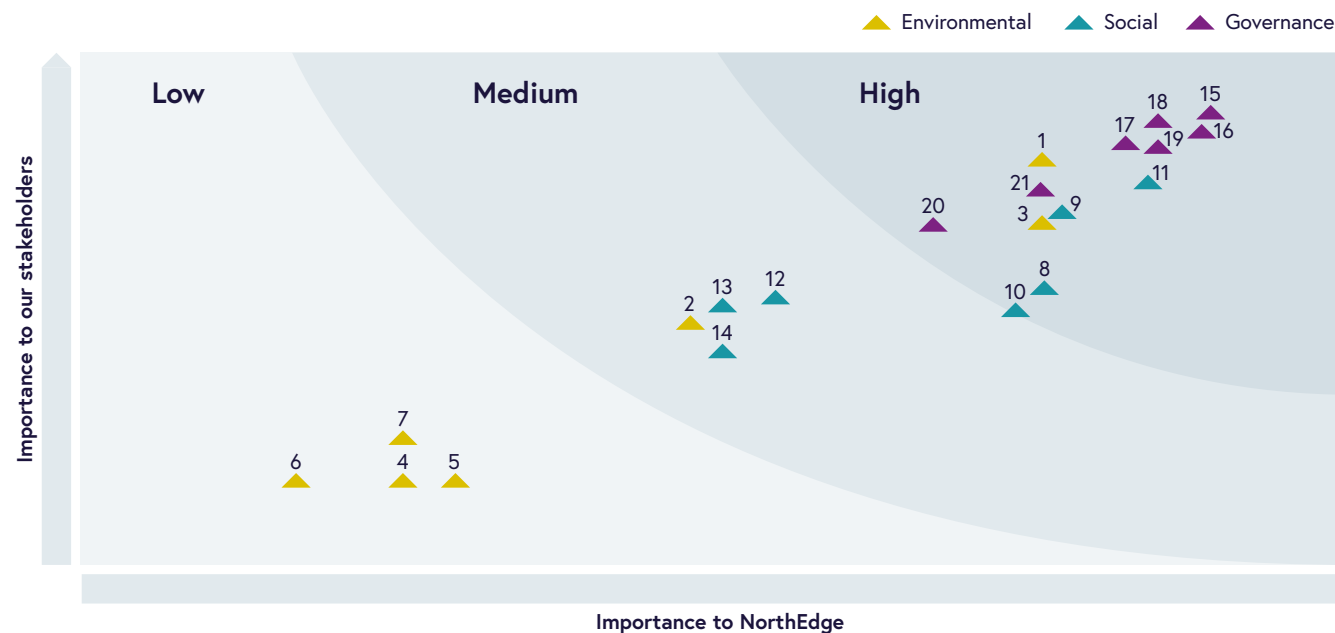
ESG Materiality Assessment

At NorthEdge, we believe that sustainability, in the truest sense of the word, is a core part of building better businesses. We also recognise that ESG is about progress not perfection, to achieve this we focus on the things that make the biggest difference. To date a huge part of our success, both at NorthEdge and across the portfolio, has been as a result of understanding what is material when taking the steps to build better, more sustainable businesses.

To evidence this, our core ESG team have assessed 21 topics across E, S & G to establish which are most material and relevant for us as an investor and employer, as well as which are most material for our stakeholders – including both our current/future investors and our current/future portfolio management teams.

Whilst we understand and appreciate the importance of each individual topic, the chart below demonstrates how significant we believe each topic is based on the nature of our business and portfolio. We use this materiality assessment to determine where we focus our time, influence and data collection efforts.

Given the majority of our portfolio companies are UK-headquartered services businesses, we have a low carbon-intensive portfolio and do not use material amounts of energy. As a result, S & G factors are the most material across our portfolio.



Environmental		Social		Governance	
1	Measuring Emissions	8	Employee Engagement	15	Corporate Governance
2	Energy Usage	9	Employee Attraction & Retention	16	Cyber & Information Security
3	Net Zero Alignment	10	Diversity, Equity & Inclusion	17	Business Resilience & Risk Management
4	Waste Management	11	Health, Safety & Wellbeing	18	Regulatory Compliance
5	Air & Water Pollution	12	Human Rights	19	Policies & Procedures
6	Water Supply	13	Customer Impact (Value Chain)	20	Board Diversity, Structure & Pay
7	Biodiversity & Ecosystems	14	Corporate Citizenship	21	Supply Chain Management

Alignment and Support for Key Initiatives



Supporting Sustainable Development Goals

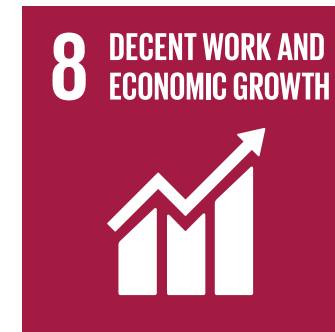
There are 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which recognise that ending poverty and other deprivations must go hand-in-hand with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth – all while tackling climate change and working to preserve our oceans and forests.

Within our portfolio, all NorthEdge companies support at least four of the goals:



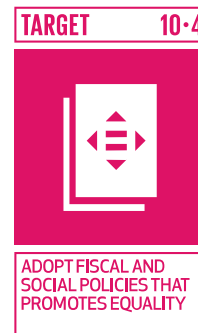
83%

of portfolio companies have at least one female board member and 100% have female representation on SLT



96%

of the NorthEdge portfolio conduct annual colleague surveys to assess engagement



33%

of the NorthEdge portfolio have representation from ethnic minorities on the SLT

96%

of portfolio companies have an equal opportunities policy



6

portfolio companies with a carbon reduction/net zero plan, with 16 in the process of building net zero plans

External Recognition

North
Edge.

Principles for Responsible Investment



We have been a signatory to the Principles for Responsible Investment (PRI) since 2012 and utilise the six principles of responsible investment to frame our responsible investment policy and approach.

The Principles



1

We will incorporate ESG issues into investment analysis and decision-making processes.

We will be active owners and incorporate ESG issues into our ownership policies and practices.



2

3



We will seek appropriate disclosure on ESG issues by the entities in which we invest.

4



We will promote acceptance and implementation of the Principles within the investment industry.

We will work together to enhance our effectiveness in implementing the Principles.

5



6



We will each report on our activities and progress towards implementing the Principles.

Each year, we report our responsible investment activity to the PRI. This provides us with year-on-year analysis of our progress. General Partners are rated between 1 and 5 stars for each category, with 5 stars being awarded to signatories who demonstrate leading responsible investment practices.

Principles for Responsible Investment



This is the first time NorthEdge has received the top rating for both the 'Policy Governance & Strategy' and 'Direct - Private Equity' categories, I am really proud of these results given the criteria was expected to be stricter for this reporting period. We have also increased our absolute score in these categories against previous years, with the 'Direct - Private Equity' score reflecting the progress we have made with our portfolio companies.



Ray Stenton,
Managing Partner



The modules assessed in 2023 (based on 2022 performance) were:



Policy Governance and Strategy

Assesses the responsible investment policy, alongside roles and responsibilities; external reporting and disclosures; capital allocation; overall stewardship strategy; engagement with policy makers; climate change and sustainability outcomes.



Direct – Private Equity

Assesses investment guidelines; commitments to investors; materiality analysis; due diligence; monitoring and exit post-investment; and disclosure of ESG portfolio information.



Confidence Building Measures

A new scoring module was introduced for the 2023 reporting cycle. This covers a number of ESG factors, from basic internal control mechanisms, to internal audit and third party external assurance. It emphasises increasing confidence that there is a rigorous and robust process to collect the information presented in external ESG reports, such as the PRI Transparency reports.

In 2023, NorthEdge achieved the following scores:

Summary Scorecard

PR I Median Module Score

Module Score Star Score	AUM coverage	☆☆☆☆☆ (0<=25%)	☆☆☆☆☆ (>25<=40%)	☆☆☆☆☆ (>40<=65%)	☆☆☆☆☆ (>65<=90%)	☆☆☆☆☆ (>90%)
Policy Governance and Strategy ☆☆☆☆☆						91
Direct - Private equity ☆☆☆☆☆	>50%					96
Confidence building measures ☆☆☆☆☆						80

Orbis Advisory ESG Transparency Index 2023

We were once again recognised as a top performer in the Orbis Advisory Private Equity ESG Transparency Index. The 2023 report analyses firms' ESG reporting performance, profiling top performers across multiple categories and sharing insights from firms on their ESG journey and the benefits of implementing good ESG practices.



The index, now in its third edition, assessed 161 PE firms listed in the BVCA directory across six categories: global buy-out funds; mid-market private equity; growth equity; alternative lenders; direct investors; and infrastructure funds.



This year, we are proud to have achieved **fourth place** overall out of 161 firms assessed and **third place** in the mid-market category, a testament to our responsible investment practices, portfolio engagement and internal policies.

Key things which the panel highlighted included our disclosure of quantitative ESG portfolio KPIs; our in-house reporting on environmental and social KPIs and annual progress against these; reporting on our decarbonisation plan through to 2050 with four distinct stages; collaborating with the BVCA on their ESG toolkit and engaging in many ways to show a commitment to education of PE firms earlier in their ESG journey.

Orbis Advisory ESG Transparency Index 2023



NorthEdge are a firm which truly understand ESG's value and importance, propelling their PortCos forward with true innovation. Furthermore, it is fantastic to hear that the index has fed into NorthEdge's ESG strategy, with the firm proactively listening to and responding to the specific feedback we offer to all those included in the ranking.



Rupert Clark-Lowes, Director of Orbis Advisory



Find out more about the ESG Transparency Index [here](#)



Awards



I am extremely proud to see NorthEdge achieve more external recognition during 2023 for the work we are doing to embed ESG in our business, portfolio and industry. Whilst we are delighted to have won a number of awards, we were equally as thrilled to be shortlisted and recognised alongside a number of high quality firms in our industry – showing that our culture, processes and behaviours are equal to many of the much larger managers within the private equity industry.



Keven Parker,
Managing Partner



We have been delighted to receive external recognition within the private equity community for our ESG efforts during 2023.

Winners



Lower mid-cap
House of the Year



ESG - GP Award



Most Improved Fund

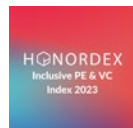


Individual Changemaker:
Nicola McQuaid

Achievements



World's first PE firm to
achieve Gold Carbon Literate
Organisation status



Honordex PE & VC Index
2023: Achieved 6th place
& Most Improved Fund



ESG Transparency PE Index
2023: Achieved 4th place
overall

Nominations

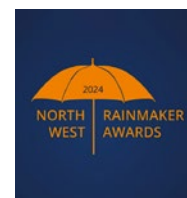
In relation to our ESG activity in 2023, we were also shortlisted for the following awards at the start of 2024:



Value Creation ESG



ESG Professional of the Year: Lucie Mills



Changemaker of the Year: Lucie Mills

Special recognition



GP (below £1bn AUM)

Environmental

North
Edge.

Our 2023 Carbon Footprint

For the second year in a row, we are pleased to have delivered a reduction in our carbon footprint, this year reducing our overall Scope 1, 2 and Operational Scope 3 carbon footprint by 9% against our baseline year of 2022⁽¹⁾.

	2022	2023
On-Site Fuel Combustion	5.3	4.2
Purchased Goods & Services	199.3	182.3
Business Travel	26.1	25.3
Employee Commuting & Homeworking	22.2	19.0
Fuel & Energy-Related Activities	11.6	9.8
Operational Waste	0.0	0.1
Total Carbon Emissions	264.5	240.7

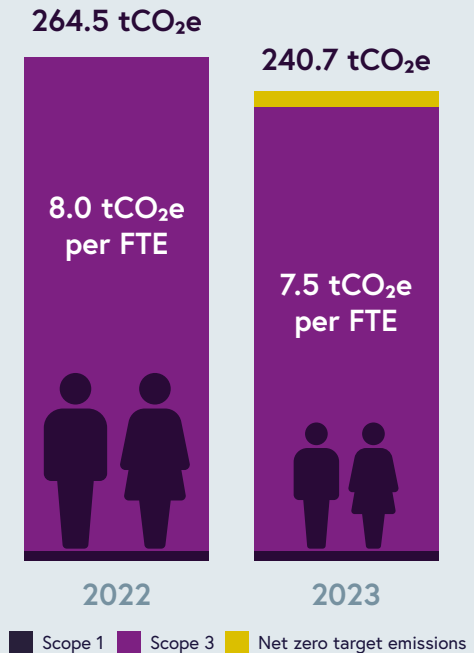
NorthEdge Operational Emissions



⁽¹⁾NorthEdge work with Positive Planet to independently measure our carbon footprint and provide 3rd party challenge on our carbon reduction plans. This year Positive planet adapted their methodology to include "Well to tank" emissions, as well as updating their emissions factors to align with the latest government guidance and GHG protocols. This resulted in our footprint calculations being materially different to prior reporting. As we set 2022 as our baseline year in our Net Zero plan, we felt it was important to restate our 2022 footprint to reflect this revised methodology so we can better track how the measures we have brought in impact our footprint.

Our 2023 Carbon Footprint

As a growth-focussed business we expect our workforce and business operations to grow over the coming years, which is why we also assess our carbon footprint both in absolute terms (as per the previous page) and based on carbon intensity. To measure our carbon intensity calculation we calculate tCO₂e per FTE, which has reduced 6% YoY:



Evolving how we take responsibility

Alongside our advisors we are constantly assessing the best way to take responsibility for our impact. While carbon offsetting has played a significant role in our environmental strategy to date, it has become increasingly clear that a more integrated approach is needed to deliver long-term sustainability. Carbon offsetting often addresses the symptoms rather than the root causes of environmental degradation.

As a result, for our 2023 activity we have decided to transition our funding focus from carbon offsetting initiatives to nature-based solutions and ocean plastic clean-up efforts. This strategic shift aligns with our core values and the evolving understanding of effective environmental stewardship. By redirecting our resources to nature-based solutions and ocean plastic clean-up, we are adopting a more proactive stance to address the underlying issues and contribute to systemic change.

Our 2023 Carbon Footprint

Nature-Based Solutions

Nature-based solutions, such as reforestation, wetland restoration, and regenerative agriculture, offer a number of benefits that extend beyond carbon sequestration. These initiatives enhance biodiversity, improve water quality, and support local communities by creating sustainable livelihoods. By investing in these solutions, we aim to foster resilient ecosystems that can adapt to climate change, while simultaneously addressing carbon reduction in a holistic manner.

2,400 trees planted



Ocean Plastic Clean-Up

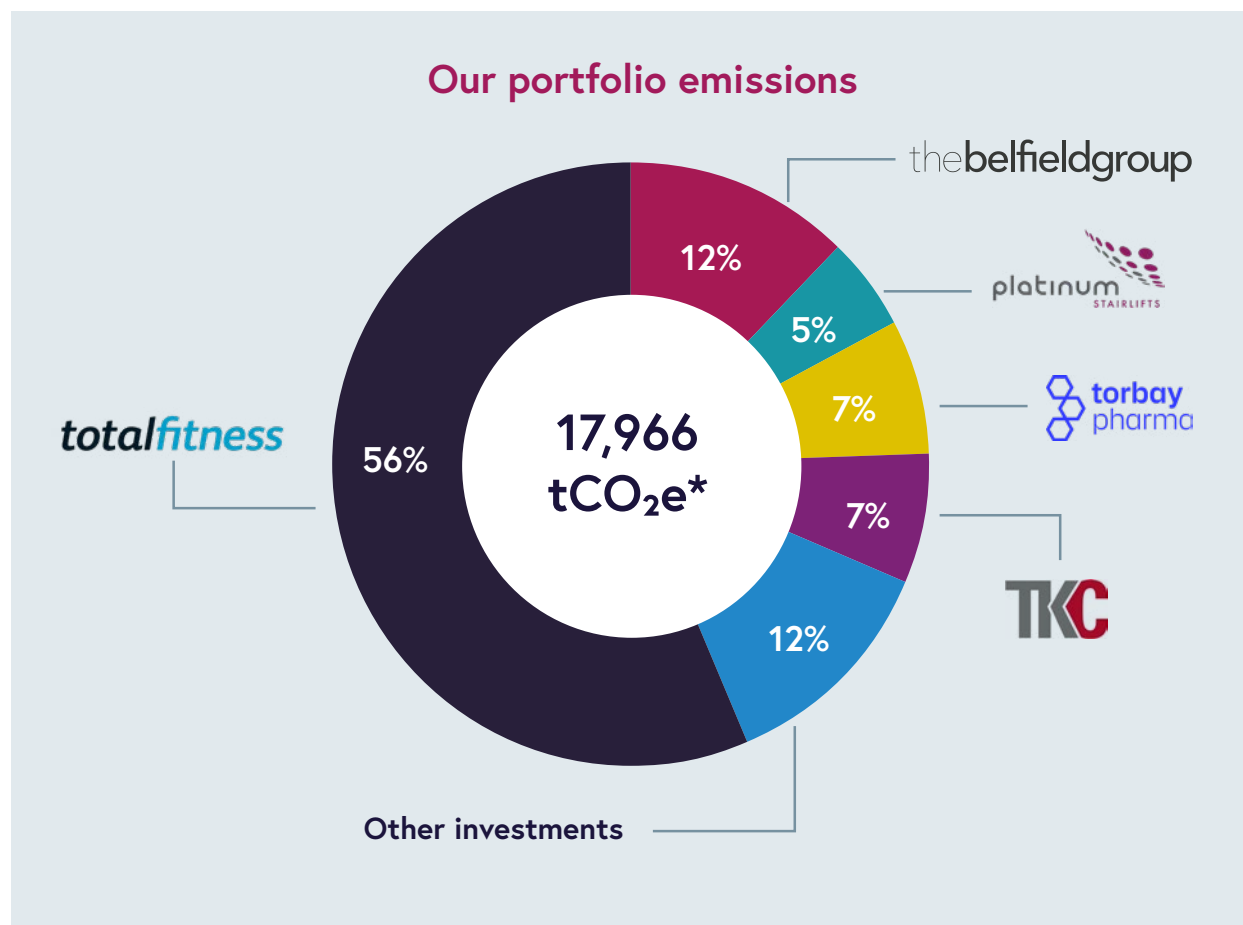
The proliferation of plastic pollution in our oceans poses a severe threat to marine life, coastal communities and global health. Addressing this issue requires immediate and sustained action. Our investments in ocean plastic clean-up projects are designed to mitigate the adverse impacts of plastic waste, protect marine biodiversity and promote healthier ocean ecosystems. This effort also aligns with the global movement towards a circular economy, encouraging the reduction, reuse, and recycling of materials.

240kg removed from the ocean, the
equivalent of **12,000** plastic bottles



Portfolio 2023 Carbon Footprint

Across the portfolio 70% of emissions are generated by two companies. Both of these companies are already taking steps to support the decarbonisation of their own operations.



Company	2022 emissions	2023 emissions
Total Fitness	11,042.4	10,117.1
Belfield	3,000	2,200

*Portfolio carbon emissions based on where NorthEdge was the lead investor as at 31 December 2023. This figure reflects the Scope 1 & 2 emissions of these companies.

Net Zero



Progress against our Net Zero Commitments

In 2023 we released our Net Zero plan, where we publicly committed to reaching Net Zero by the year 2040 on a Scope 1, 2 and Operational Scope 3 basis.

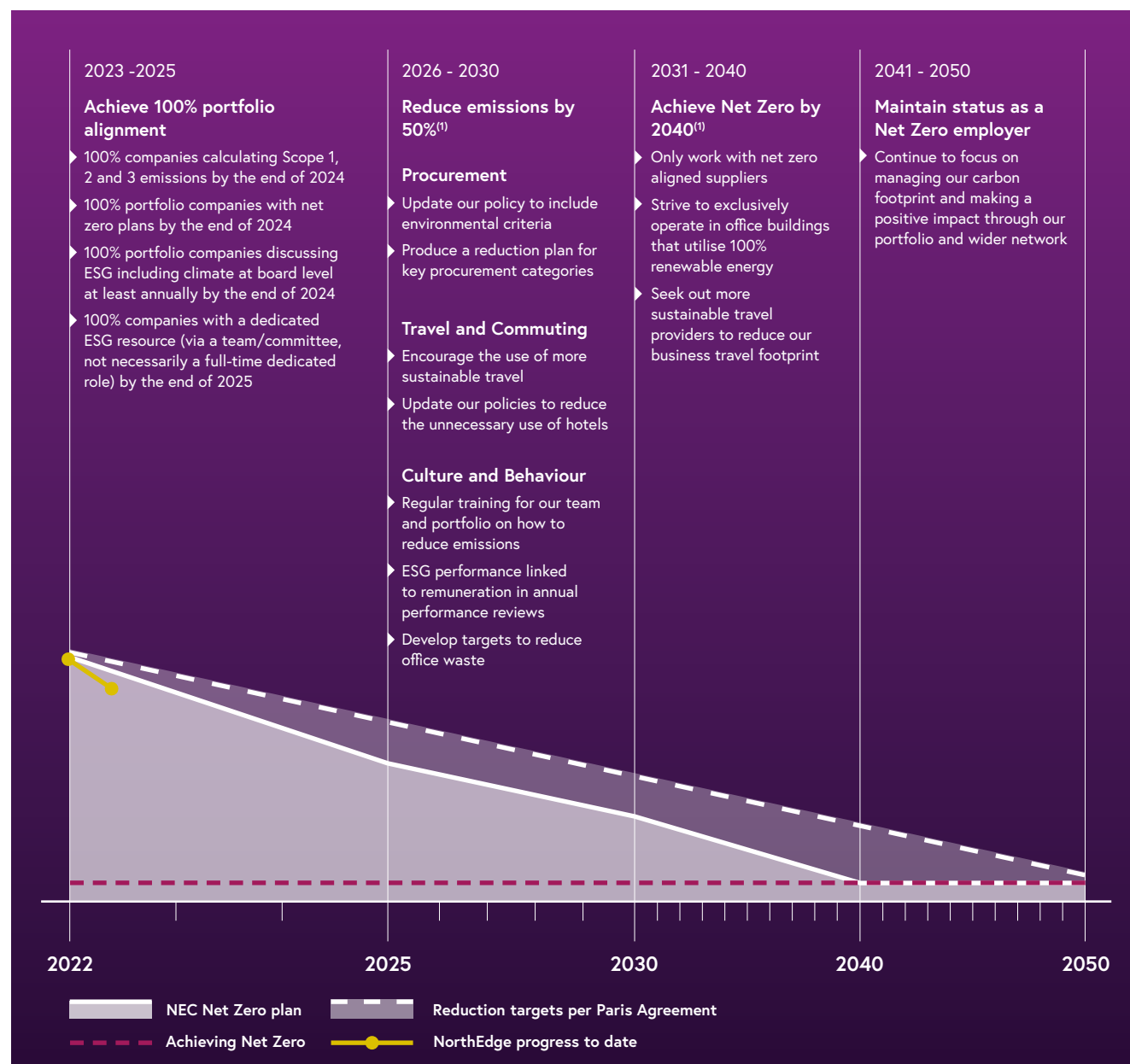
We will achieve this through a focus on our own operational footprint (for our Scope 1, 2 & Operational Scope 3 emissions⁽¹⁾), but predominantly by encouraging 100% alignment with our portfolio companies by the end of 2024⁽²⁾, given this will deliver a more material impact (17,966 tCO₂e Portfolio emissions vs. 240.7 Scope 1, 2 & Operational Scope 3 emissions).

⁽¹⁾Excluding our portfolio emissions which are assessed based on if they align with net zero

⁽²⁾For companies we invested in prior to 2023. Companies receiving investment from 1 January 2023 have a completion target of two years from the date of investment

Net Zero

The chart below represents our path to Net Zero on a Scope 1, 2 & operational Scope 3 basis, overlaid with our actual performance:



Net Zero

We are pleased to report that we have made the following progress in 2023 against our Net Zero commitments:

Portfolio progress:

By 2024

100% of companies calculating Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions⁽¹⁾.



2023 Performance

100% of our portfolio companies reported scope 1, 2 and 3 carbon emissions in our 2023 annual ESG survey.

By 2024

100% of portfolio companies discussing ESG including climate at a board level at least annually by 2024.



reporting ESG on a monthly basis

2023 Performance

58% of our portfolio companies are reporting on ESG matters at the board level and we will continue to encourage the remainder to do so by the end of 2024.

By 2025

100% of our teams to have dedicated ESG resource (via a team/committee, not necessarily a full-time dedicated role) who will be responsible for reporting and leading on carbon reduction initiatives in the business.



2023 Performance

63% of our portfolio have dedicated ESG resource, given this has gone backwards we will actively encourage the remainder of the portfolio to implement by the end of 2025.

By 2024

100% portfolio alignment with Net Zero⁽¹⁾.



2023 Performance

25% of our portfolio companies have a Net Zero plan (or documented decarbonisation plan) and 67% are in the process of building one. We will continue to encourage the remainder of our portfolio to complete by the end of 2024⁽¹⁾.

⁽¹⁾For companies we invested in prior to 2023. Companies receiving investment from 1 January 2023 have a completion target of two years from the date of investment

Net Zero

NorthEdge progress to reduce Scope 1, 2 & Operational Scope 3 emissions by 50% over the period to 2030:

Procurement:

During 2023 we updated our procurement and expense policies to include environmental criteria and performed a more comprehensive review of our emissions to endeavour to move our carbon footprint calculations towards activity-based measurement rather than spend given it is more accurate. These activities have resulted in a 9% decrease in our Procurement emissions year-on-year.

Travel and commuting:

We achieved reductions in Business travel (3%) & Employee commuting (14%) in 2023 as a result of encouraging more sustainable methods of transport, as well as educating our people on their own carbon footprints – predominantly through becoming the first PE firm globally to achieve Gold Carbon Literate Organisation status. We have also updated our travel policy to encourage colleagues to reduce the number of unnecessary hotel stays depending on miles travelled.

We have also continued to encourage the use of the company electric vehicle scheme to drive a reduction in emissions from necessary business travel and commuting (accounts for 17.4% of our 2023 footprint).

Culture and behaviours:

In 2023, we formalised our commitment to ESG by linking ESG progress to variable remuneration across the business, which is assessed through the annual appraisal process. We encourage our people to become more aware of how they can support us to reduce our emissions through training, as well as asking the investment team to positively influence the portfolio through engagement and active partnership.

Find out more about our [Remuneration Policy](#) in relation to the integration of sustainability risks



We will continue to ensure that we make progress against both our short-term and long-term ambitions over the coming years, and plan to report progress against our Net Zero plan annually through our ESG report.



Read our full Net Zero plan [here](#)



Social

North
Edge.

Delivering Social & Economic Value across the UK Regions

The Economic and Social Impact of NorthEdge in the United Kingdom in 2023



Independent Review by Mark Gregory, Business Economist, Visiting Professor of Business Economics at Staffordshire University & Senior Fellow at the Institute of Place Management.

£844m

of GVA contributed



61%

GVA contribution from North, Midlands & Scotland



28%

of jobs in 30% most deprived areas



61%

of employment in the North, Midlands & Scotland



13%

higher wages than UK average



27%

more productive than UK average (size adjusted)



£231m

exports generated



c.11,500

jobs (FTEs) supported



2,354

employees trained



53%

supplier spend in North & Midlands



£500k

raised and donated to charities



Delivering Social & Economic Value across the UK Regions

Summary

In 2023, as well as creating financial value, NorthEdge were able to generate a significant impact on economic and social development across the UK, contributing £844 million of GVA and supporting just under 11,500 jobs (FTEs). With 61% of the impact in the North, Midlands and Scotland, this represents a real and measurable private sector contribution to levelling up. And the impact was far-reaching: 28% of the employees in the NorthEdge portfolio live in the 30% most deprived areas in the UK. Creating well-paid work in places with unemployment rates typically two or more times the national average and incomes just over half the UK mean is hugely impactful.

This impact was achieved through strong productivity performance, output per head was 21% higher than the comparable national average for the make-up of NorthEdge's portfolio with exports accounting for more than a quarter of turnover. And the benefits were shared: wages were 13% higher than the national average and adjusting for NorthEdge's regional mix of employment, men were paid 17% more than their peers and women 15% more.

The majority of NorthEdge's companies sell their products and solutions to other companies, helping customers to improve their own performance and productivity. In addition, NorthEdge portfolio companies employed 2,390 people (FTEs) internationally and spent over £200 million with non-UK suppliers in 2023, some of this spend will further stimulate UK economic activity.



Delivering Social & Economic Value across the UK Regions

Introduction

Alongside creating the financial returns needed to meet their commitments to their investors, NorthEdge are committed to ensuring every investment they make has a positive impact. As a significant investor in the North and Midlands initially, now expanded to the UK's regions outside of London and the South East, NorthEdge seeks to generate value across a wide geography and large population. Since its creation, the company has attracted £900 million of funds, over 90% from outside of the UK, and created over £1 billion of Enterprise Value. Across its portfolio, based on where NorthEdge is the lead investor⁽¹⁾, the NorthEdge portfolio generates turnover of £863 million and directly employs 6,843 people (FTEs) globally.

To understand the current level of impact and the scope to increase this in future, NorthEdge have for the first time commissioned a detailed analysis of the economic and social impact of their own operations and portfolio based on 2023 activity⁽¹⁾.

Economic and social impact

While most reporting of business activity focusses on financial measures such as profit and loss, the products sold, people employed and purchases made have a wider impact on economy and society nationally and at a local level.

This economic and social impact assessment is an estimate of NorthEdge's impact on:



Economic activity, measured by contribution to Gross Value Added, at the national and regional level in the UK.



The level of employment, number of full-time employees (FTEs), supported nationally and regionally.



Productivity, GVA per FTE, both within NorthEdge and with their portfolio.



The quality of work as demonstrated by wage levels, gender pay ratios and investment in training and apprenticeships.



Wider social impact measured by activity levels in areas with significant challenges, measured by the UK Index of Multiple Deprivation.



Additional impacts in communities through charitable giving and volunteering.

⁽¹⁾Based on companies where NorthEdge is the lead investor as at 31 December 2023

Delivering Social & Economic Value across the UK Regions

Economic impact

The widely accepted measure to assess economic contribution is **Gross Value Added (GVA)**. This broadly reflects the company profits and employee salaries generated at each stage of the supply chain. It is the total of direct, indirect and induced output which represents additional value to the economy.

The **direct** effect arises from the activities of NorthEdge and the companies in the portfolio (NorthEdge portfolio).

The **indirect** effect reflects the impact that purchases made by NorthEdge and its portfolio have on suppliers, who in turn purchase goods and services along the sector's supply chain.

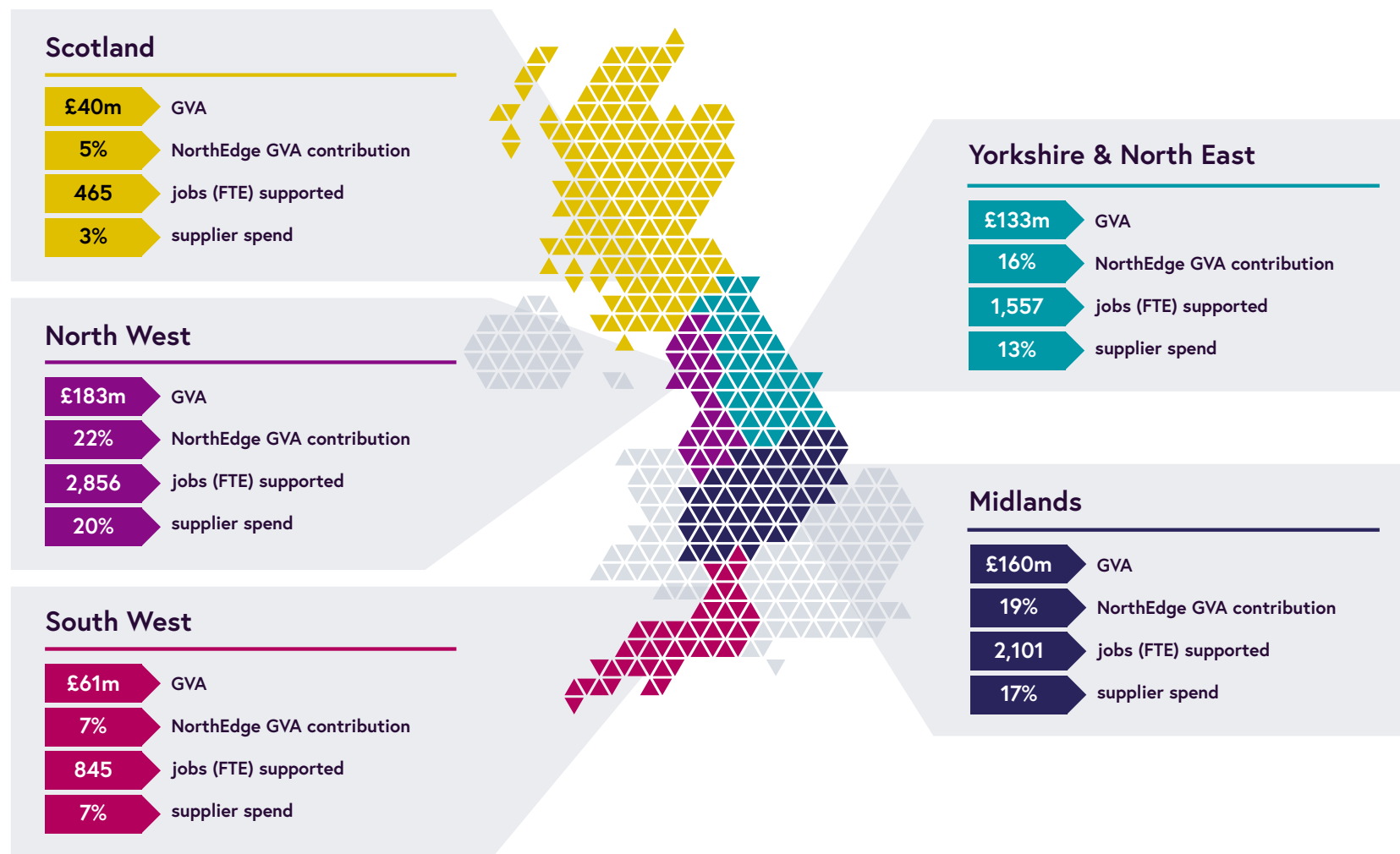
As a result of the direct and indirect activities, employees in NorthEdge, its portfolio and suppliers receive wages. The **induced** effect arises from the households of these employees spending a share of the income they receive on the consumption of goods and services.

In 2023, the activities of NorthEdge and its portfolio generated a contribution of £844 million to Gross Value Added in the UK, comprised of £333 million of direct effect, an indirect contribution of £297 million and induced GVA to the value of £214 million.

Of this £844 million, 61% (£516 million) was generated in the North and Midlands of England and Scotland. With the North West alone accounting for 22% of the total UK impact and the Midlands 19%, a share of impact significantly greater than the 10% and 13% of overall national output accounted for by these geographies.



Delivering Social & Economic Value across the UK Regions



In addition, exports of £231 million, just over a quarter of total revenue, are a good illustration of the competitiveness of companies in the portfolio, able to generate sales in the global market. NorthEdge and its portfolio also spent over £200 million with international suppliers, a share of which is likely to stimulate additional UK economic activity adding to the £844 million of GVA contribution.

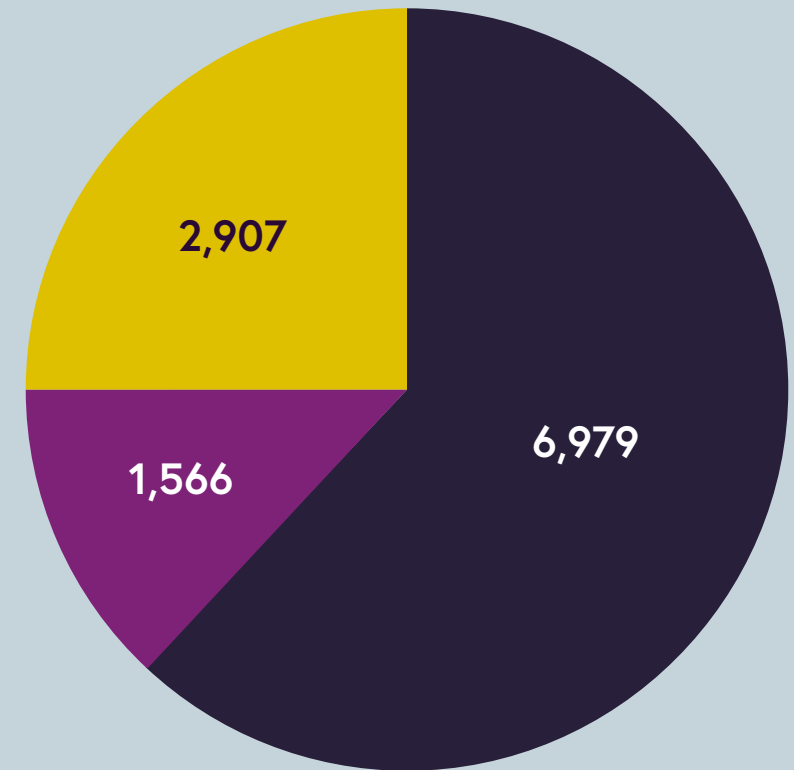
Delivering Social & Economic Value across the UK Regions

Employment generated

The estimated employment supported by NorthEdge and its portfolio comprises the total number of jobs across the direct, indirect and induced economic activity. These jobs result from the activities of NorthEdge and its portfolio (the direct effect), the impact on supply chains from purchases from suppliers (the indirect effect), and from the additional spending in the economy both from NorthEdge's own employees (and portfolio employees) and those employed by suppliers spending their wages (the induced effect).

In 2023, 11,453 UK jobs were supported: 4,488 through direct employment by NorthEdge and its portfolio, 4,015 FTEs due to indirect supplier activity, and 2,950 roles due to the consumer spending stimulated by the direct and indirect employment.

Reflecting NorthEdge's regional focus, 6,979 FTEs were supported across the North and Midlands of England and Scotland (61% of the total), with 2,856 in the North West alone. Of the direct employees of companies in the NorthEdge portfolio in 2023, 81% lived in the North, Midlands or Scotland.



Delivering Social & Economic Value across the UK Regions

Productivity

Productivity, measured by GVA per employee, is an assessment of the efficiency of how resources are deployed. Across the UK, productivity varies by region, with London being significantly more productive than the rest of the UK. These variations are driven in large part by differences in the productivity of individual sectors in the economy and the mix by location of those sectors across the country.

NorthEdge's portfolio generated GVA of £74,000 per FTE in 2023, over 2% more than the UK average despite having only 4% of employees based in the high productivity London region and with a smaller share of activity than average in the UK's highest productivity sectors.

Adjusting for the regional distribution of the NorthEdge portfolio, GVA per employee in 2023 was in line with the UK average. While on a sector adjusted basis, NorthEdge's portfolio was 21% more productive than the UK average.

It is widely accepted that size is a significant influence on the productivity of UK companies. As an investor in companies at an earlier stage of their development, NorthEdge's portfolio is biased towards smaller companies: only 4 of the 24 companies in the portfolio employ more than 250 employees in the UK and 9 have less than 100 FTEs. On a size weighted basis, compared to UK average performance by company size, the NorthEdge portfolio was 27% more productive than the UK average in 2023.

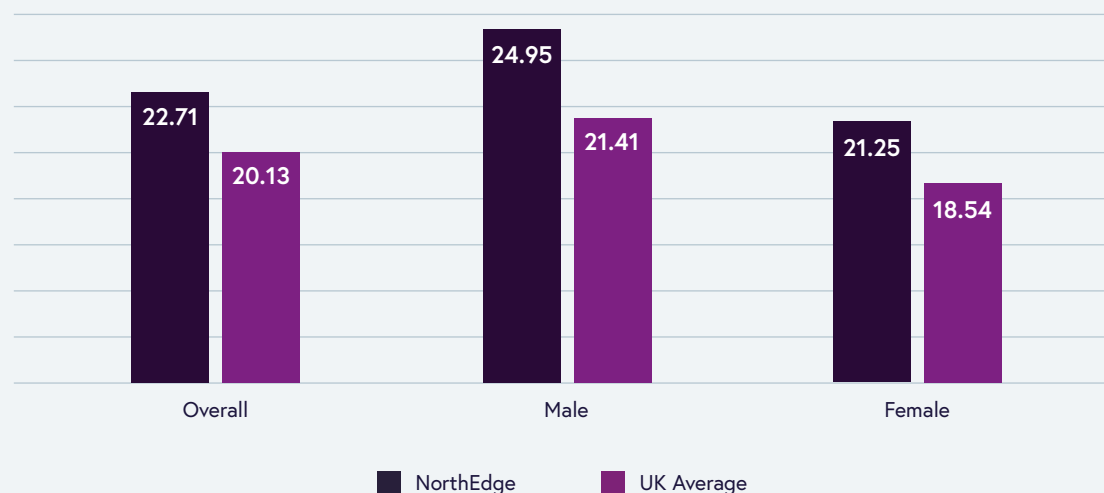
As is to be expected from a collection of companies from a range of sectors and at differing stages in their development, productivity does vary across the portfolio. However, viewed overall, the companies in the NorthEdge portfolio are generating a significant economic and employment impact through a relatively efficient use of resources.

Delivering Social & Economic Value across the UK Regions

Quality of employment

Unequal levels of investment and quality of skills are widely accepted as two of the major barriers to balanced economic progress across the UK. Successful employers invest in both their physical assets and their human resources.

Wage levels are an important measure of an employer's commitment to their workforces. NorthEdge's average wage of £22.71 per hour was 13% higher than the average for Great Britain of £20.13 in 2023. Weighting pay by the home location of NorthEdge and its portfolio companies workforces, identified by a postcode mapping, male employees in NorthEdge's portfolio were paid on average 17% more than their peers, with female employees receiving 15% on average more than females working in their areas.



NorthEdge and its portfolio companies also prioritise fair pay. In 2023, the gender pay gap across the NorthEdge portfolio was 9% vs. a UK average of 14.3%, with five companies having a gender pay gap in favour of women.

NorthEdge's investment in employees goes beyond paying relatively high wages. The companies in the NorthEdge portfolio employed 55 apprentices and NorthEdge provided 488 hours of internships in 2023. The portfolio also spent over £1.3 million on training with 2,354 employees undertaking training or upskilling during the year.

Delivering Social & Economic Value across the UK Regions

Wider impact in communities

In generating economic activity and jobs and paying wages above average, NorthEdge's portfolio companies are significant contributors to levelling up across the UK's regions. However, even though economic inequalities between regions are significant, there are even starker differences between areas within regions, with some places experiencing extremely high relative levels of deprivation. The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) datasets provide small area measures of relative deprivation across each of the constituent nations and regions of the United Kingdom, dividing the population into deciles of deprivation from the 10% most deprived to the 10% least deprived.

By mapping the home postcode of the employees of the NorthEdge portfolio to IMD areas it is possible to identify the share of the workforce living in the more challenged areas of the country.

Across NorthEdge's portfolio in 2023, 28% of employees lived in the 30% most deprived areas in the United Kingdom. Eight companies, around one third of the portfolio, have more than 30% of their workforces coming from the 30% most deprived areas, with nearly three quarters of one company's employees coming from the 30% most challenged areas in the country.

In particular, the company with the highest share of employees (73%) from the most 30% of deprived areas is providing significant employment to places where the level of unemployment is at least twice the national average, potentially much higher in practice (up to four times according to some estimates), and income levels are only 60% of the average level across the country.

Taken together with the relatively high levels of wages described on the previous page, this geographic spread of employment represents a significant impact of private capital in some of the most challenged places in the country.

In a further commitment to challenged individuals and places, NorthEdge and its portfolio raised and donated c.£500,000 for a range of charities in 2023.

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion



Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

At NorthEdge we recognise that it's our responsibility to build businesses that are sustainable, secure, inclusive and diverse. We are committed to enhancing diversity efforts across all underrepresented groups in our business and in our portfolio, because we recognise that having a diverse and equitable culture can lead to faster growth, productivity and innovation – ultimately creating more value for all stakeholders.

Whilst we have made great progress, we know there is still more to do. To play our part in continuing to make progress, we are focussed on:



Organising training to ensure we create an inclusive culture for all colleagues at NorthEdge and across our portfolio, by gaining an understanding of different perspectives



Continuing to prioritise the mental wellbeing of our colleagues through our partnership with Sanctus



Sharing learnings and best practice through a range of resources and podcasts



Running several initiatives to encourage a more diverse pipeline of talent into the Private Equity industry, including the 10,000 Black Interns Programme and NorthEdge's Private Equity Challenge



Participating in events and supporting initiatives with organisations such as 6% Club, Andy's Man Club and Smart Works

Our ESG team ensures we continue to improve the impact we have on our business, portfolio and community. The work we do to promote DE&I across our business, our portfolio and our market continues to be a fundamental element to our success. We use both extensive in-house knowledge and draw on external experts to continuously challenge ourselves and improve on our DE&I performance, building better businesses, and industries, as a result.

Building an inclusive, diverse and equitable culture

At NorthEdge we believe we have a key role to play in encouraging people from a diverse range of backgrounds to consider a career in private equity, setting a positive example for our portfolio and being a voice for change in our community.



During 2023, we didn't make as much progress as we would have liked on implementing our Racial Diversity awareness programme, which will be a key focus for 2024. In order to achieve this, we have partnered with Inner Ambitions to support us to deliver a training and reflection programme throughout 2024.

In addition, we remain committed to improving our approach across neurodiversity, disability & socio-economic diversity during 2024. From a neurodiversity & disability perspective, we are exploring further accreditations & training; and from a socio-economic perspective, as well as continuing with programmes to provide opportunities for learning and development through intern programmes, we commissioned an economic and social value review to demonstrate the positive impact we have generated across the UK regions in 2023 – the results of which are detailed on page 29 in this report.

Encouraging a career in Private Equity

Whether it's participating in the 10,000 Black Interns programme, running our Private Equity Challenge with a number of universities in our regions, or organising networking events for young professionals, we are proud to be able to give young talent exposure to our business and the opportunity to learn more about the private equity industry.

PE Challenge 2023

We ran our fifth annual Private Equity Challenge in 2023, giving students the opportunity to learn more about the world of private equity and gain first-hand experience of the investment process. Students from Leeds University Union Trading & Investment Society, University of Sheffield Investment Society and Manchester University Trading & Investment Society took part in the challenge.

The challenge, which takes place over seven weeks, covers each stage of a transaction process, from origination to the final investment pitch. A team of students from the University of Sheffield were announced as the winners for the second year in a row.

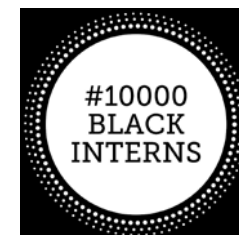
As one of the few university challenges of its type in the UK, it is an example of our commitment to encouraging a wider and more diverse set of talent into the Private Equity industry. During 2024 we are planning to expand the challenge to cover more Universities across our regions.



10,000 Black Interns

Elijah Essien joined Team NorthEdge for a six-week internship as part of the 10,000 Black Interns initiative - which we have supported since 2021. Originally from Manchester, Elijah found a passion for business at GCSE and A-level. During his time at NorthEdge, Elijah attended portfolio company board meetings, worked alongside a number of our partners, and worked on an origination project – which he presented to the investment team in his final week.

Elijah told us about his reasons for joining the 10,000 Black Interns initiative, why he would recommend it to others, and what he will take from his six weeks at NorthEdge into his future career in this podcast episode:



#22
Getting to know
Elijah Essien.
The NorthEdge Podcast

Elijah Essien, 10,000 Black Interns

[Listen here](#)

#22

Young Professionals

We also hosted a Young Professionals event in the summer, giving young talent exposure to our business and the opportunity to learn more about the private equity industry, as well as providing 13 weeks of internships during 2023.

Championing DEI across our community

International Women's Day

In recognition of International Women's Day 2023, we ran a series of activities throughout March to support Smart Works – a UK charity that exists to give women the confidence they need to reach their full potential, secure employment and change the trajectory of their lives.

Activities included a charity bike ride; a networking event; and spending time in the recently-opened Manchester Smart Works centre in the city centre.

During the networking event, where inspirational women across our community attended to discuss how we can continue to drive positive change collectively, we asked those that attended to donate clothes and pledge time to the charity – we are delighted to have provided a large donation of clothes, raised £785 and collectively committed to 125 hours volunteering at the Smart Works centre.



International Men's Day

In support of International Men's Day, and in light of our commitment to raising awareness of the importance of mental health in and outside of the workplace, in November we took the opportunity to speak with Luke Ambler in our Beyond the Capital podcast series.

Founder of Andy's Man Club, as well as storyteller, motivational speaker, author, and mental health campaigner, Luke discusses the importance of getting men to talk about their mental health and how as business leaders we can create an environment for people to thrive and create a positive mental health culture.



Luke Ambler, motivational speaker, author, mental health campaigner, chair and co-founder of Andy's Man Club

In recognition of International Men's Day we invited Luke onto the podcast to discuss the events in his life that led him to the role he has today with Andy's Man Club and the importance of getting men to talk about their mental health, alongside some key steps we can all take to achieve sustainable high performance.

[Listen here](#)

#24



NorthEdge Colleague Survey

Each year we undertake an annual team engagement survey, which we use to get feedback on a number of topics that are important to us and our people – including culture; attracting and retaining talent; developing capability and careers; and effective leadership.

Now in its sixth year, we have continued to use the results to drive our activity, introducing initiatives to ensure we are continually building a great place to work for all our people.

In 2023, over 85% of our people agreed or strongly agreed that:

They would
speak highly
of NorthEdge
without being
asked



Our values and
brand improve
our chance of
winning business



NorthEdge
genuinely values
its people



They are
comfortable
being themselves
in the work
environment



The work
atmosphere
stays friendly
and professional



The leadership
team are good
at leading by
example



We treat people
with fairness,
respect & dignity



Mistakes are
treated as
learning points



NorthEdge Colleague Survey

A real strength of NorthEdge is that its people genuinely care about the direction of the business and its performance, as well as a genuine desire to do the right thing no matter the situation

The best thing about working at NorthEdge is being inspired by colleagues who show up and do a great job every day.

NorthEdge's organisational culture on the whole is fantastic – it captures a desire to succeed (succeed in the right way) & to support each other and our portfolio.

eNPS

For the third year running we have also tracked our Employee Net Promoter Score (eNPS), a measure that allows us to understand how satisfied and engaged colleagues are with work.

This year we achieved an eNPS score of
+52

We are pleased that this score is still sitting well above the Financial Services sector average of +28, and that it has also improved from our half year check in from June 2023 (+49), however we are committed to building an environment where everyone can thrive and this also means that we pause to reflect on our areas for improvement.

Our score hasn't improved as we had hoped, therefore we have continued to use the feedback from the survey to explore, refine and implement ways to make NorthEdge better for everyone – including providing our people with more clarity on career development opportunities; making a commitment to celebrating success & showing appreciation; and reminding our people how our objectives link to our broader purpose and strategy. We know that in times of uncertainty, such as the macro-economic challenges we are currently facing into, transparency and communication are key, therefore we hope that during 2024 we can continue on the right trajectory & remain a great place to work.

In the Community

Once again, we have been delighted to see the efforts from across our business and portfolio, with people going above and beyond in support of their own colleagues and communities.

Our 2023 highlights include:



London Marathon

In April 2023, our Executive Chair, Grant Berry, ran the London Marathon in support of the National Brain Appeal – a charity close to his heart. Joined by 48,000 fellow runners and cheered on by the mass crowds, Grant finished the marathon in a time of four hours and 51 minutes.

In total, Grant managed to raise an astonishing **c.£47,000**, plus an additional **c.£11,000** of gift aid, for the National Brain Appeal. The charity raises vital funds to support world leading centres for the diagnosis, treatment and care of patients with neurological and neuromuscular conditions.

Raised £58,000



National Brain Appeal Charity Golf Day

In July 2023, we hosted our annual charity golf day at The Wilmslow Golf Club in support of the National Brain Appeal.

Welcoming 23 teams and 96 golfers, everyone enjoyed a full day of golf followed by a charity dinner in the evening. We would like to thank ITC for providing the grand raffle prize at the dinner – a luxury holiday to Barbados for two. Our thanks also go to each of the ten portfolio companies who sponsored one of the holes, The Wilmslow Golf Club for being fantastic hosts, as well as everyone who offered their time and energy to make it such an enjoyable and successful day. All in all, we were delighted to raise an incredible **c.£55,000** for the National Brain Appeal.

Raised £55,000



A Day in the Dales

We are proud to support our regional charities too. In summer 2023, we hosted our first 'Day in the Dales' event to support Yorkshire Children's Charity. This charity helps children across Yorkshire who are at a disadvantage in life due to disability, ill health, or financial circumstance.

Welcoming 15 teams and 87 walkers from across our region and community, the event comprised a full day in the Yorkshire countryside walking eleven miles around Appletreewick in Wharfedale. In total, we are delighted to share that we raised **£15,000** for the charity.

Raised £15,000



Volunteering to support Value Creation

We further supported Yorkshire Children's Charity with a one-on-one value creation strategy session. Lucie Mills and Andy Ball ran the session offering insights into how to develop the long-term strategy for the charity to maximise its impact in the community.

Strategy session



Mission Christmas 2023

In December 2023, we were proud to run our Mission Christmas campaign for the fourth year in a row to support Wood Street Mission in Manchester, Toys4Bham in the Midlands and Yorkshire Children's Charity in Leeds. This year, we collectively donated over 400 gifts and selection boxes.

400 gifts

In the Community

Throughout 2023, we also supported:



We are delighted to have raised and donated over c.£130,000 in 2023 – which takes the total raised and donated by NorthEdge and its portfolio companies in 2023 to c.£500,000!

Governance

North
Edge.

Our ESG Committee

The ESG Committee was established in 2021 as a formalised focus group to review ESG developments and trends in the external market, internally at NorthEdge and across our portfolio. The committee meets on a quarterly basis to set the overall ESG approach and governance for the firm, with senior representation from all areas of the business.



▶ Lucie Mills, Chair ESG Committee, Partner

lucie.mills@northedge.com



▶ Ray Stenton, Managing Partner

ray.stenton@northedge.com



▶ Prem Mohan Raj, COO

prem.mohanraj@northedge.com



▶ Phil Frame, Partner

phil.frame@northedge.com



▶ Jordana Cropper, Investment Director

jordana.cropper@northedge.com



▶ Daniel Galley, Portfolio Business Partner

daniel.galley@northedge.com

Our ESG Committee

The ESG team and ESG Committee continue to review ESG developments and trends in the external market, internally at NorthEdge and across our portfolio. Over the next year the ESG Committee will focus on:

Continuing to deliver our net zero plan

Continuing to support the portfolio to build their net zero plans

Roll out third party ESG DD on every new investment process

Portfolio maturity assessments

Continue to align to SFDR principles at an entity level and publishing PAI reports for our existing funds

Encourage NorthEdge colleagues to utilise the Volunteering Scheme

Participation in industry events

Portfolio engagement and collaboration

Continued participation in key initiatives

Regular internal ESG refresher training

Our Responsible Investment Approach

As investors, our active ownership approach allows us to monitor, and where possible mitigate, the ESG risks across our portfolio – as well as identifying opportunities for our portfolio to create value and drive positive change in their industries and communities.

From a New Investment perspective, in 2023 we developed a partnership with an ESG DD Operating Partner to trial Third Party ESG Due Diligence on all new investment opportunities. This external diligence covers a review of macro ESG risks (supply chain resilience, human rights etc.), upcoming regulation, competitor analysis, a materiality assessment & a bespoke ESG roadmap. This DD will be refined and rolled out throughout 2024.

From a portfolio perspective, the core ESG team assess portfolio maturity for all companies where we are the lead investor. Utilising the data we collect through the annual ESG survey, tailored maturity assessments are created covering material risks and/or opportunities across E, S and G for each portfolio company. We also closely assess the trends seen in our portfolio data to measure progress against targets and ensure our companies are consistently addressing any risks they're exposed to.

A detailed overview of how ESG is integrated into our investment approach can be found in our Responsible Investment Policy.

Click [here](#) to read more.



Sustainable Financial Disclosure Regulation (SFDR)

Whilst we are currently not in scope for the Sustainable Finance Disclosure Regulation (SFDR), we appreciate the importance of this regulation and, as such, have published a Principal Adverse Impact Statement, a Sustainability Risk Policy and a Remuneration Policy Disclosure in order to support our ambitions for the future, when we are in scope for the regulation.

The documents below outline how we integrate sustainability risks into the investment process and remuneration policy:

[Remuneration policy in relation to the integration of sustainability risks](#)

[Sustainability Risk Policy](#)

[Principal Adverse Impact Statement](#)

In 2023 we also published our first Principal Adverse Impact Report, in line with Article 8 requirements for the 2022 reporting period, for all companies where we are lead investor from Fund II onwards. We collect PAI data from our portfolio on this basis as we believe these are the companies where we can best utilise our influence to drive the greatest positive impact.



Click [here](#) to read more.



Cyber & Information Security

The impact of cyber attacks and data breaches on UK businesses continues to grow:

Businesses in the UK suffered a total cost of
£30.5bn
as a result of cyber crime in 2023

50%
of UK businesses have reported cyber attacks or security breaches in the last 12 months

81%
of cyber attacks and data breaches happen to small to medium sized businesses

Only
31%
of UK businesses undertook a Cyber Security Risk Assessment in the last year

97%
of cyber attacks and data breaches could have been prevented if businesses had comprehensive cyber services in place

At NorthEdge we have a well-defined Cyber and Information Security programme, run by specialist third-party operating partners. To ensure cyber remains a key focus across our own business and portfolio we:

Have a set of minimum cyber requirements in place for our portfolio

Make cyber diligence and ongoing monitoring a core part of the Investment Agreement

Complete an annual review and regular check-ins with each portfolio business to monitor their cyber progress and performance – relative to their maturity and risk profile

Track progress in monthly board packs

Manage a panel of dedicated and specialist operating partners that help NorthEdge and the portfolio mitigate risk and manage response

Continue to share best practice and insights from specialists in our network, through our dedicated portfolio platform Nexus & forum events

Portfolio Case Studies



North
Edge.

Case Study

HELIOS
GLOBAL GROUP

Helios is a full-service, independent, global healthcare communications and strategic consultancy based in Cheshire. Helios works with global pharmaceutical clients to deliver high-quality, high-impact bespoke solutions across a range of services including medical writing, advisory boards, training and symposia.

The company has implemented a number of initiatives to support the delivery of their ESG goals throughout recent years, in line with their objectives of Aiming for Excellence and Being a Great Place to Work.



As a forward-thinking, ambitious, and conscientious organisation, we understand that the way we run the business and every decision we make can have a profound influence on the environment, people and communities that surround us.

Together with our team, our clients and the wider community, we can continue to build a better world – one that thrives on shared values of environmental stewardship, social equity and ethical governance. We are proud that ESG is high on the agenda at Helios, and we are looking forward to advancing our ESG commitments in the future.



Andrew Minnock, Emma Bryant and Simon Whiteley,
founding directors of Helios Global Group



Case Study

HELIOS
GLOBAL GROUP

Released first ESG Report

Helios shared its first **ESG Report** at the start of 2024, reflecting the business' commitments to sustainability and reducing their environmental impact, the advancements the business has made in social and corporate governance objectives while contributing to drive stakeholder value creation.



Net Zero commitment



- ▶ The business has publicly committed to achieving Net Zero by 2040, with an emissions plan in progress and annual carbon footprint assessments undertaken by a third party
- ▶ This commitment is particularly important to a number of Helios' customers

Social and gender equality – resulting in best-in-class colleague retention rates

Over
80%
of employees are female.

14
fully trained mental
health first aiders.

Achieved an eNPS score of
+76

Helios Co-Founder, Emma Bryant, featured in JP Morgan's '**Top 200 Female-Powered Businesses**'. A report which analysed over 40,000 companies before shortlisting 200 exceptional businesses which have been founded, led, owned or managed by women.

**Top
10**

Over
£3,500
raised for nominated charities,
with Helios also supporting local
environment initiatives.

As a business they have contributed
£32.7m
GVA⁽¹⁾, concentrated in the
North West of England.

External Recognition

- ▶ Awarded the silver medal for sustainability from EcoVadis, only awarded to the top 25% of companies assessed.
- ▶ The EcoVadis rating is based on evidence-led assessments of a company's sustainability performance on four key themes: **Environment, Labour & Human Rights, Ethics, and Sustainable Procurement.**



⁽¹⁾See The Economic and Social Impact of NorthEdge in the United Kingdom: Methodology for calculation

Case Study



Cutwel is a specialist distributor of engineering cutting tools and machine tool accessories. Operating from its purpose-built, 24,000sq ft distribution facility in Cleckheaton, West Yorkshire, Cutwel specialises in supplying precision cutting tools and machine tool accessories to the engineering industry throughout the UK and Ireland.

Since we partnered with Cutwel in 2018, the business has accelerated and enhanced its ESG credentials through a number of initiatives.



Cutwel is on a mission to drive positive change. We are proud of our progress to date and our ambitious decarbonisation targets as we aim to become Net Zero by 2040.

Making a positive impact is part of our company culture and our roadmap provides feasible steps to help us protect our people, community and planet at pace.



Adam Gillard, CEO of Cutwel



Case Study



Investing in their people



- ▶ Continuous investment in people through internal and external training; providing clear succession paths; promoting from within the workforce; provision of excellent benefits and competitive remuneration
- ▶ All Directors have participated in a dedicated Leadership training programme, to enable them to provide guidance and set standards for future leaders
- ▶ Developed a dedicated training academy & programme to continually upskill colleagues across the business – from role-specific training to leadership development courses
- ▶ Achieved eNPS score of +45

Social and gender equality

Cutwel ensure that they are responsible recruiters, seeking applicants from within the local area with the provision of quality training programmes.

The company actively employs apprentices & provides younger people their first career opportunities.

60%
of SLT positions held
by female staff.

Average pay is **1%**
favourable to women – unlike the UK
average of 14.3% favourable to men.

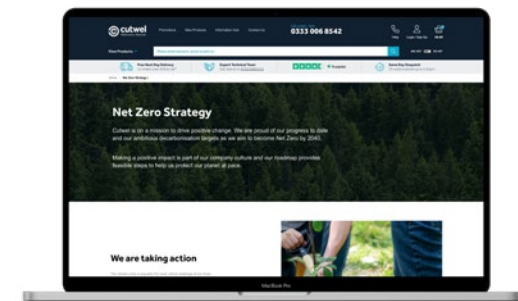
100%
return rate from maternity leave consistently
achieved over the last 5 years.

Supported a number of charities – including
Andy's Man Club, Forget Me Not Children's
Hospice, Breast Cancer Now.

As a business they have contributed
£31.5m
GVA⁽¹⁾, concentrated in the North of England.

Commitment to Net Zero

- ▶ Publicly committed to **Net Zero** by 2040
- ▶ Emissions measured annually by third party operating partner
- ▶ Invested in Carbon Literacy Training for eight members of the Cutwel Green Team



⁽¹⁾See The Economic and Social Impact of NorthEdge in the United Kingdom: Methodology for calculation

Case Study



Creating an inclusive environment

Reorganised the configuration of the office to ensure it is easily accessible for wheelchair users.



Supported neurodiverse colleagues by making appropriate adjustments to ensure colleagues feel safe, comfortable and able to thrive.



External Recognition

Awarded **Great Place to Work** Status in December 2023, awarded after their first application.



Awarded with the **Yorkshire BVCA Vision Award** in 2023 in recognition of their growth and support of the local community.



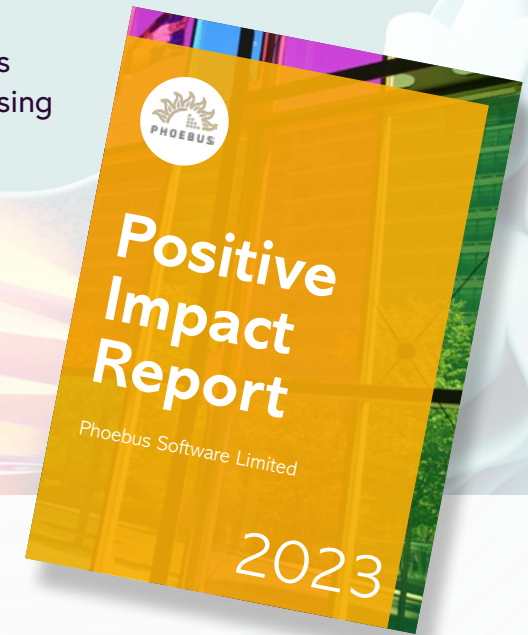
Case Study



Phoebus Software Limited provides mortgage servicing software and services into tier 1, 2 and 3 financial institutions across the UK, including Atom Bank, Legal & General and OSB.

Now in their second year of producing an ESG report, Phoebus have embraced the responsibility to lead by example, recognising the actions and impact they have today shape the future.

Click [here](#) to read more.



At Phoebus we strive for continuous improvement and innovation which is matched in our ambitions and approach to all areas of ESG.



Paul Hunt, CEO of Phoebus

Case Study



Developing their people

Implemented a new learning management system to support continuous learning and emphasise the importance of developing their people to drive both personal progression but also business performance.

6.6

average hours of training per employee per month - 2.6 hours more than in 2022.



Colleague satisfaction in the business has increased by

7% YoY to 89%

- this supports the business to deliver a 98.4% retention rate.



Setting an example on DEI

Gender diversity within Phoebus

34% Women | 66% Men

Gender diversity within UK tech

19% Women | 81% Men

Ethnic diversity at Phoebus

37% Other | 63% White British

Ethnic diversity in the UK

18% Other | 82% White British

Commitment to reducing climate impact

- ▶ Application underway to submit Net Zero Plan to the Science Based Targets Initiative.

PSL's net zero targets

1

Reduce scope 1 & 2 emissions by 100% by 2030.

2

Reduce scope 3 emissions by 42% by 2030.

3

Reduce our total emissions by ~90% by 2040, becoming net zero.

- ▶ Achieved Bronze Carbon Literate Organisation status and further training to be delivered to 20+ colleagues which will achieve Phoebus a Silver Carbon Literacy accreditation in 2024.

Case Study



Community

In recognition of the business' efforts, Phoebus was named one of Birmingham Children's Hospital Charity's '100 Heroes for 2023'.

Phoebus also sought to share its expertise with other local businesses, hosting a Talking Tech event on Cyber Security – inviting local businesses to assist them to protect their businesses from cyber-crime.

Beyond monetary donations, Phoebus also emphasises the importance of volunteering time and skills. In 2022, the company partnered with Make Good Grow, an innovative charity matching service that connects volunteers with good causes.

As a business they have contributed

£19.2m

GVA⁽¹⁾, concentrated in the Midlands.

Governance

- ▶ **ISO27001 Accredited** - a testament to their relentless pursuit of excellence in protecting clients' valuable data
- ▶ **Attained SOC 2 compliance**, demonstrating the businesses' ongoing dedication to protecting the interests of clients and stakeholders by implementing robust security measures

External Recognition

Recognised by Best Companies (independent engagement survey) as a

1*

company – meaning the business has very good levels of engagement.

Top 25

Placed in the Top 25 (no. 16) companies across the UK in the technology sector and in the Top 50 (no. 42) companies in the UK at the mid-size level.

Managers are rated

2*

which equates to outstanding levels of engagement.

⁽¹⁾See The Economic and Social Impact of NorthEdge in the United Kingdom: Methodology for calculation

Case Study

totalfitness

Total Fitness operates 15 full-service health and fitness clubs across the North of England. The clubs range from 61,000 to 138,000 square feet in size and offer an extensive range of facilities including multiple swimming pools, studios, free weights and cardio equipment, as well as a food and beverage provision.

The management team have driven growth through people-power with significant investment in its leadership and culture, and this engagement underpinned the business's ability to respond to the global energy crisis – with energy costs (tripling), a focus on energy reduction was needed to support both the sustainability of profitability and the planet.



Case Study

totalfitness

Energy reduction programme

Invested in new combined heat & power (CHP) units at their 15 clubs – which has supported the business to achieve a

c.15%

reduction in gas consumption over the last 12 months as well as reducing overall carbon emissions by c.15% versus using boilers to heat the pools.

Converting excess heat into electricity now provides
70-80%
of the daytime electricity requirement.

12 of 15

clubs source water direct from the water table from on-site boreholes, making them self-reliant for shower and WCs.

Recent change of energy supplier to ensure

100%

of electricity is generated from renewable source.

Reduced Energy Usage by over 20%

Energy Efficiency Committee in place implementing energy saving initiatives such as night usage reductions and rolled out a number of supporting initiatives including LED lighting replacement.

Investing in people for growth

- ▶ Developed a highly acclaimed Employee Value Proposition "More is Possible" delivering a compelling employer proposition which underpins industry-leading attraction and retention levels, and consistently world-class eNPS level.
- ▶ Works with globally acclaimed partners in leadership and coaching – The Living Leader and Gallup International respectively to accredit internal master trainers and build proprietary leadership and development programmes rolled out throughout the organisation.
- ▶ Partnered with Future Fit for Business to create a bespoke training programme as part of their commitment to advancing the learning and development of their employed and self-employed personal trainers.
- ▶ Committed to providing entry-level career opportunities (20% of employee base aged 16 to 21) and growth within the organisation or beyond with +40% of leavers being promoted out of the organisation into higher earning roles, pursuing a personal ambition or entering further education.
- ▶ +50 eNPS (as at Jan '24) increasing by +62 pts under current management team.
- ▶ High levels of organisational trust and inclusion - Employees score 8.5/10 for both "employee organisational trust" and "At work I can be myself and feel comfortable".
- ▶ Equal gender split across the employee base including leadership, with flattening gender pay gap (c.2% median male favourability).



Case Study

totalfitness

Generating Social Value

The Total Fitness health club proposition has contributed

c.£49m⁽¹⁾

to the economy in the last 12 months through subjective wellbeing, individual development, social and community development and improved physical and mental health of its member base.

Social value scales in lock-step with the growth of overall membership and visitation.

In addition, as a business they have contributed a further

£49m

GVA⁽²⁾, concentrated in the North of England.

Recent External Recognition

Winner in the Top 50 Inspiring Workplaces in the UK & Ireland 2024.



Bronze Winner for Employer Value Proposition at the European Employer Brand Management Awards 2023.



Awarded Winner in the UK Culture Awards – Innovation category – for their "Elevate" management development programme.



Ranked in the EDI Maturity upper quartile ("Strategic" benchmark) in the Hospitality, Travel and Leisure category, by inclusion specialists "Inclusion In" in partnership with Oxford Brookes University.

inclusion in

⁽¹⁾As at April 2024

⁽²⁾See The Economic and Social Impact of NorthEdge in the United Kingdom: Methodology

Looking Forward

Our mission is that every investment we make will have a positive impact.

To support this, throughout 2024 we will be focussing our collective efforts on:

Portfolio engagement and collaboration

Portfolio maturity assessments

Continuing our efforts to reach Net Zero by 2040

Integrating third-party ESG DD into the investment process

Publishing our fifth TCFD report

Publishing our second PAI report

Communicating Social Value at a GP and portfolio company level

Improving adoption of the Volunteering Scheme

Continued focus on improving colleague engagement

Continued participation in key initiatives & exploration of alignment to additional initiatives

Industry representation & advocacy through BVCA Responsible Investment Advisory Group

Regular internal refresher training

Investing in specialist training to further our education on underrepresented groups & different perspectives

Methodologies

The Economic and Social Impact of NorthEdge in the United Kingdom: Methodology

Overview of approach to estimate GVA and employment

Economic activities are related to one another within the wider economy through a network of supplier-customer relationships. A change in the economic activity of a particular firm or sector will normally stimulate impacts elsewhere in the economy. An increase in the demand for any good or service will trigger yet more demand for goods and services (and the associated labour requirement) along the supply chain. The amount of inputs (goods, services and labour) that are required to produce an additional unit of output varies across products and sectors and will depend on the technology used in the production process.

The Input-Output model⁽¹⁾ developed by Wassily Leontiev⁽²⁾ describes the relationships between different sectors of the economy. Using the UK Input-Output model for 2019⁽³⁾ as the building block, it is possible to quantify the total contribution to the economy of the NorthEdge portfolio. Within this framework, three distinct effects can be identified and measured:

1. A **direct effect** arising from the demand associated with economic activity (e.g. the Gross Value Added (GVA) generated and the employment created).
2. An **indirect effect** arising from the additional demand of goods and services along sector supply chains.
3. An **induced effect** arising from households spending a share of the additional income generated on the consumption of goods and services.

To estimate the size of these different impacts output multipliers available from the UK Input-Output tables produced by the Office of National Statistics (ONS)⁽⁴⁾ are used. By applying industry GVA/Output ratios and labour productivity measures (from the statistical data published the ONS⁽⁵⁾) to the Output multipliers thus obtained, industry level GVA multipliers and employment multipliers are produced.

⁽¹⁾The Input-Output model uses a supply and use matrix showing how much of each good is used in final production to calculate the economic impact of supply chains following a change in demand.

⁽²⁾Wassily Leontiev is a Russian 20th Century Economist who won the Nobel Prize in economics for creating the Input-Output methodology.

⁽³⁾UK Input-Output 2019 <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/input-output/input-output-supply-and-use-tables/index.html>

⁽⁴⁾Ibid

⁽⁵⁾Regional gross value added (balanced) by industry: all International Territorial Level (ITL) regions. ONS, April 24th 2024. Business Register and Employment Survey available at www.nomisweb.co.uk

Methodologies

Direct effect

NorthEdge contributes directly to the UK economy through the GVA it creates, through the jobs supported and through its contribution to public finances.

Their direct contribution to the UK's GDP is the GVA generated through its productive activity. This has been calculated by subtracting the costs of goods and services purchased by NorthEdge and its portfolio companies from the total value of production, measured by total revenue.

The direct employment has been measured by headcount converted into full time equivalents.

Indirect effect

The activity of NorthEdge and its portfolio generates additional demand through the goods and services they purchase through the domestic component of their supply chains. The businesses in the supply chain in turn generate additional economic output and demand for goods and services along their own supply chains.

The additional output effect on the suppliers' own supply chains has been estimated using ratios of GDP to output (measuring indirect consumption) and GVA multipliers sourced from the UK Input-Output tables for 2019 applied to the supplier spend data provided by NorthEdge, after excluding purchases from non-UK based suppliers. The purchases of each company were analysed by category to identify the most appropriate industry specific GDP to output ratio and multiplier to use.

The indirect effect on employment was calculated using data from the ONS on GVA and FTE⁽⁶⁾ by industry to estimate industry specific productivity ratios (GVA/FTE), based on the supply costs analysis described above, which were then applied to the indirect GVA total to calculate the indirect employment.

Induced effect

As household disposable income increases due to the increased provision of labour services, so does household spending. Not all the increase in disposable income will be spent; the Marginal Propensity to Consume (MPC) describes the proportion of additional household income that would be spent rather than saved. Increased household spending in turn generates economic activity within the economy to satisfy the additional demand for goods and services.

⁽⁶⁾ Regional gross value added (balanced) by industry: all International Territorial Level (ITL) regions. ONS, April 24th 2024. Business Register and Employment Survey available at www.nomisweb.co.uk



Methodologies

The induced household income from supply chain activity was calculated by applying employee compensation as a share of GVA by industry to the total indirect GVA generated by expenditure on supply. The direct wages paid by NorthEdge and its portfolio provides the additional induced income.

The induced effects were calculated by multiplying the additional household income by the MPC, adjusted by the ratio of imports to local production at the product level and consumer taxes. Data on the MPC, import ratios and household consumption patterns were obtained from the ONS.

Information from the Input-Output tables on employee compensation as a share of GVA and GVA per FTE from the ONS by industry were used to estimate induced employment resulting from supplier spending. Estimates of GVA/FTE for household spending across the economy were used to translate direct wage payments by the NorthEdge portfolio to induced employment estimates.

Regional Analysis

NorthEdge and its portfolio companies information on employee's home location by postcode and supplier spend by postcode were used to map all employment and spending to the regions and nations of the United Kingdom. To reflect potential leakage of second and subsequent impact of spending out of regions, the ONS Business Register and Employment Survey were used to generate location quotients to reflect the distribution of economic activity across the UK. These were used to weight the multipliers used at the national level to generate estimates of direct, indirect and induced GVA and employment by region.

Productivity

Estimates of GVA and employment by section and 2-digit level of the Standard Industrial Classification for each UK region and nation were sourced from the ONS's analysis of Regional GVA by Industry for 2022⁽⁷⁾ and the Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES)⁽⁸⁾. These were used to calculate productivity by sector by region for NorthEdge and each company in the NorthEdge portfolio based on the sector mapping developed for the overall GVA and employment estimates. The 2022 data was updated to 2023 using ONS measures of inflation, output and productivity by sector.

Weights were estimated to reflect the regional distribution of NorthEdge and portfolio activity based on the employee location and supply chain spending profiles developed previously. An additional comparator based on OECD estimates of UK productivity by company size (1-249 employees, and over 250 employees)⁽⁹⁾ was used to generate size weighted comparisons.

⁽⁷⁾ GVA by Region and Industry, ONS April 2024.

⁽⁸⁾ Business Register and Employment Survey, www.nomisweb.co.uk.

⁽⁹⁾ <https://stats.oecd.org/index>



Methodologies

Wages

Data was collected on male and female average hourly wages for NorthEdge and each company in the NorthEdge portfolio. These were compared with data on UK average hourly wages by resident by region from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings for 2023⁽¹⁰⁾. The NorthEdge data was weighted by 2023 FTEs by company to generate an equivalent national hourly wage.

Male and female hourly wages were also compared on a regional basis by weighting the national sample by the regional distribution of NorthEdge employees.

Indices of Multiple Deprivation

A postcode to IMD⁽¹¹⁾ mapping tool was used to identify the share of NorthEdge portfolio company employees living in the 30% of areas of highest deprivation.

Data

All company data was provided by the individual companies in the NorthEdge portfolio and has not been independently verified.

⁽¹⁰⁾Available at www.nomisweb.co.uk

⁽¹¹⁾<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2019>

Methodologies

Carbon Emissions & Net Zero: methodology

Last updated June 2024

Sustainable Planet Holdings Limited t/a Positive Planet (PP) adheres to the greenhouse gas accounting standard Greenhouse Gas Protocol (GHGP) Corporate Accounting and Reporting Standard developed by the World Resources Institute (WRI) and the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD), which is the global standard for calculating corporate GHG emissions.



Positive planet (PP) also complies with the accounting principles detailed in the IPCC 2019 Refinement to the 2006 IPCC Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories and its accompanying database of GHG emissions factors and other related environmental metrics EFDB.

For industries for which there are specific guidelines, where relevant PP also complies with these standards, such as the GLEC Framework for Freight.

Legislative reporting instruments adhered to include:

- ▶ EU Directive 2022/2464 as regards corporate sustainability reporting
- ▶ EPA's Simplified Guide to Greenhouse Gas Management for Organizations
- ▶ UK government's Technical standard for Completion of Carbon Reduction Plans
- ▶ Environmental Reporting Guidelines: Including streamlined energy and carbon reporting guidance (SECR)

PP is built on a bespoke taxonomy defining the activities and properties required for Greenhouse Gas (GHG) measurement in line with its underlying standards and principles.

PP use the ISIC Rev 4 system of industry sectors, ISO country and currency definitions and codes, IATA airport codes and UN/LOCODE, the United Nations Code for Trade and Transport Locations for seaports, train stations and other transport locations.

PP update our dynamic GHG intensity factors annually where and when available.

PP use IPCC 2006 library IPCC – EFDB, and for Global Warming Potentials (GWP) PP currently use both of IPCC's Fifth and Sixth Assessment Report Global Warming Potentials (AR5 and AR6).

Methodologies

PP include all 7 Kyoto Protocol groups of GHGs and some Montreal Protocol gases not included in the Kyoto Protocol.

PP report GHGs disaggregated by GHGP 'Scopes' within both mandatory and optional boundaries. For Scope 3, PP utilise the GHGP 15 Scope 3 categories. For investments, organisations can enter financed emissions (category 15) that have been pre-calculated according to the Principles for Carbon Accounting for Financials (PCAF) 'built on GHG Protocol' framework for financial organisations.

For GHGP average data method PP source factors from governments' and environmental agencies' annually updated datasets including but not limited to:

- ▶ UK - Defra
- ▶ USA - EPA
- ▶ Australian govt
- ▶ New Zealand Government
- ▶ Canadian government
- ▶ AIB – European electricity intensities
- ▶ Ademe - France

For supplier specific GHGs and GHG intensities, PP provides the capability to enter absolute tonnes of emissions and/or GHG intensities.

Methodologies

NorthEdge portfolio Net Zero progress

The biggest impact NorthEdge can have towards a net zero economy is through our portfolio and management of their emissions.

Below shows a breakdown of all portfolio companies where we are the lead investor as at 31 May 2024. Despite the fact that the composition of our portfolio changes on a regular basis as we invest and divest, we are aiming to achieve 100% alignment with net zero objectives across the portfolio, with each company producing a net zero plan by the end of 2024, or two years following the date of investments for any investments made post 31 December 2022.

Fund	Portfolio company	Sector	Year invested	Net Zero status	Net Zero target year
Fund I	Total Fitness	Consumer	2015		
Fund I	TKC	Business Services	2015		
Fund II	Belfield	Specialised Industrials	2016		
Fund II	ITC Luxury Travel	Consumer	2016		
Fund II	Clearly Drinks	Specialised Industrials	2017		2035
Fund II	Platinum Stairlifts	Healthcare	2018		
Fund II	Prohire	Business Services	2018		
Fund II	Cutwel	Business Services	2018		2040
Fund II	Catalis	Technology	2019		
Fund II	Lights4fun	Technology	2020		
Fund II	Helios	Healthcare	2021		2040

 Not currently aligned  Aligning  Aligned

Methodologies

Fund	Portfolio company	Sector	Year invested	Net Zero status	Net Zero target year
SME I	Hublsoft	Technology	2018		
SME I	Phoebus	Technology	2019		Detailed decarbonization plan
SME I	CMap	Technology	2019		
SME I	Altia	Technology	2020		2035
SME I	Distology	Technology	2021		
SME I	ICP	Business Services	2021		
SME I	ramarketing	Healthcare	2022		2050
SME I	Cezanne	Technology	2023		
SME I	Antibody	Healthcare	2023		
SME I	Contollo	Business Services	2024	N/A, invested post 2023 ESG survey	
Fund III	Correla	Technology	2021		
Fund III	Meet	Healthcare	2021		
Fund III	CTS	Technology	2023	N/A, not lead investor	
Fund III	Friend MTS	Technology	2022		
Fund III	Torbay	Healthcare	2023		

 Not currently aligned
  Aligning
  Aligned

Note: Our investment into Contollo was completed in Q1 2024 and therefore its data is not included in this analysis or report. We will set a target for them to produce a net zero plan in line with our two year deadline for new investments.

Sources



Cyber – Page 52

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Portfolio case studies - Page 53

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<https://www.phoebus.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/PHOEBUS-30823-copy-002.pdf>



Our mission is that
every investment
we make will have
a positive impact



The logo consists of the words "North" and "Edge." stacked vertically in a white, sans-serif font. To the left of the text is a small white triangle pointing to the right.

North
Edge.

Building better businesses, together.

northeedge.com