



# SUSTAINABILITY

## REPORT

2023- 2024

# CONTENTS

<b>WHO WE ARE</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>WELCOME</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>AWARDS, AFFILIATIONS &amp; CERTIFICATIONS</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>OUR APPROACH</b>	<b>6</b>
The Committee and its Mission	6
Meet the Team	6
The UN Sustainable Development Goals	8
Our Priority Goals	9
<b>OUR ONGOING COMMITMENT</b>	<b>10</b>
Environmental	10
Social	12
Governance	16
<b>OUR 2024 PLEDGES</b>	<b>18</b>
Environmental	18
Social	18
Governance	19
<b>FEEDBACK</b>	<b>20</b>



# WHO WE ARE

We empower our clients to harness the full potential of technology. Elevating results and enriching peoples' experiences.

As an award-winning technology company with over 25 years of industry expertise, we enable hundreds of SME businesses across London and the South East.

Our team has the experience and the passion to deliver, manage and support technology that enables the clients we work with to achieve their full potential.

## OUR EMPLOYEES

**129**  
across 7 core areas

## OUR PURPOSE

Making our clients' technology journey exceptional.



## OUR VALUES

### RELATIONSHIPS

Always valuing others

### GIVING

Generosity without expectation

### CARE

Having passion and compassion

### IMPROVEMENT

Striving to be better

### OWNERSHIP

Taking responsibility

## OUR CUSTOMERS

**550**  
**55** of them **ASCEND**

# WELCOME

## GUY HOCKING, UTILIZE MANAGING DIRECTOR

The well-being of our people has always been at the core of our mission, and nothing is more crucial to our collective well-being than the sustainability and protection of our planet. However, maintaining our commitment to these values can be challenging for a growing company. Many businesses view sustainability solely as a response to the climate crisis but it encompasses much more.

In this, our inaugural Sustainability Report, you will discover that our initiatives go beyond climate action to address aspects such as good health, well-being, fairness, economic growth, and the reduction of inequality. Our efforts also focus on building mutually beneficial relationships with our customers, suppliers, vendors, competitors, and community partners.

*We take immense pride in the journey we are embarking on. We know there's so much to do, which is why we have developed plans for both the short and long term. In this report, we bring those commitments together. Our progress not only reflects the underlying values on which our company was established, but also underscores the ongoing dedication and hard work of our people.*



# AWARDS, AFFILIATIONS AND CERTIFICATIONS



*Support the UN Goals*



*Ingram Micro Trust X  
Global IT Community Member*



*Basildon Good Employer 2023  
(Gold Award)*



*Basildon Good Employer 2022  
(Silver Award)*



*Real Living Wage Accreditation*



*Winner of Best Community  
Private Award 2023*



*Winner of Apprentice  
of the Year Award 2023*



*ISO 14001*



*Mental Health First Aid*



*Microsoft Partner Pledge*



*Disability Confident - Committed*

# OUR APPROACH

## THE COMMITTEE AND ITS MISSION

The Utilize Sustainability Committee's mission is to drive our organisation and the wider technology industry forward to a place which is better for people, the environment, and for our planet.

Working with an infinite mindset, our work will never be complete. We strive to set an ever-evolving framework and positive legacy for the future that can be adopted and evolved by those that follow.



## MEET THE TEAM

The Sustainability Committee was launched in 2023 and is made up of members throughout the business from varying roles. Here's the team.



**Name:**  
**Neil Hunter**

**Job Role:**  
**Senior Account Director**

**Why I wanted to join the Sustainability Committee:**  
Being part of a socially aware organisation is great because it allows us to create an impact on things further afield than where we would typically be able to reach. I wanted to join the committee to make a difference whilst also creating further discussion topics with our clients. Due to my role, I'm in a unique position where I can create positive influence across my client base and absorb feedback from organisations of all different sizes.



Name:  
**Hannah Carter**

Job Role:  
**Events Coordinator**

**Why I wanted to join the Sustainability Committee:**  
Tackling climate change is one of the biggest challenges of our time and businesses play a fundamental role in driving the change. When the opportunity arose, I knew I wanted to be a part of the team. We face immense global challenges but small changes can still make a big difference.



Name:  
**Lucy Johnson**

Job Role:  
**Senior Account Director (Applications)**

**Why I wanted to join the Sustainability Committee:**  
I joined the Sustainability Committee as I wanted to be part of the solution to help save our planet for future generations. I'm an advocate for equality, developing employees' potential, and working towards a sustainable society with integrity and unity.



Name:  
**Amy Gorbell**

Job Role:  
**Internal Marketing & Communications Manager**

**Why I wanted to join the Sustainability Committee:**  
I am passionate about creating a positive impact on our environment and local communities, by starting small we can create big changes together. I look forward to the collective efforts and meaningful outcomes that will emerge from our dedicated work within the committee.



# OUR APPROACH

## THE UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

We all know that we face big challenges in today's world: poverty, hunger, inequality and climate change are just some of the issues we need to address urgently.

Big challenges require bold action to overcome them and that is where the UN Sustainable Development Goals come in. They are a plan agreed to by all world leaders to build a greener, fairer, better world by 2030 and we all have a role in achieving them.

At Utilize, our mission is to drive our organisation and the wider technology industry forward to a place which is better for people, the environment, and for our planet; and we use the UN Global Goals framework to do that.

Every activity at Utilize is underpinned by the UN Sustainable Development goals, which are the roots of our sustainable development strategy.



## OUR PRIORITY GOALS

We have focussed specifically on 4 of the UN Sustainable Development Goals initially, and some initiatives will also overlap with other goals.



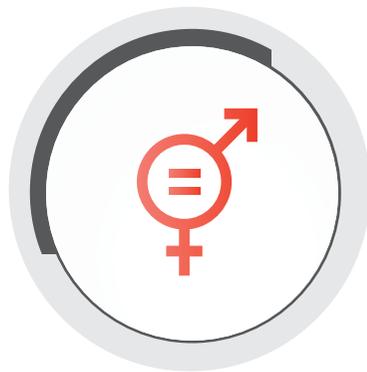
### GOAL 3 Good Health and Well-Being

*“Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages”*

The health and well-being of our workforce is always a priority - we are dedicated to ensuring healthy lifestyles and promoting overall well-being.

Our efforts include:

- Providing comprehensive private healthcare coverage through Vitality
- Offering weekly fresh fruit to encourage nutritious eating habits
- Actively sponsoring sporting events to promote physical fitness



### GOAL 5 Gender Equality

*“Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls”*

We are resolute in our commitment to, and recognition of, Gender Equality. Here we value different behaviours, aspirations and needs equally, regardless of gender.

Should you require any aspect to be explained in more detail, please reach out to us at:  
[sustainability@utilize.co.uk](mailto:sustainability@utilize.co.uk)



### GOAL 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth

*“Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all”*

We're committed to ensuring that our team are adequately equipped with the tools and knowledge they need to be able to offer the best service possible to our customers - both internal and external.

Ensuring we provide the best service and guidance possible is paramount to being able to drive wider economic growth throughout our customer base, with the intention that they can then focus more on what they do best and less on the IT underpinning everything.



### GOAL 13 Climate Action

*“Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.”*

Climate Action is an ever important focus to ensure that our planet is still thriving for future generations, and that those that come after us are able to enjoy it in the same way we do. All people and organisations of all sizes need to play their part in this collective focus area.

Our commitment to this goal includes analysing and reducing our carbon emissions as an organisation, making a positive impact to turn this around, and in turn helping our partners and customers to do the same.

# OUR ONGOING COMMITMENT



## ENVIRONMENTAL

We have taken several steps to encourage environmental benefits within our operations:

### ELECTRICAL CHARGE POINTS

Installed at our offices for all electrical vehicles.

We have used **1600kWh OF RENEWABLE** energy in 2023 at Utilize HQ in Basildon.



### SMART LIGHTING

Utilize HQ lighting is run on PIR sensors and is only active when people are present rather than being left on.

### ENERGY SAVING

Photocopier machines only wake when in use.

### OFFICE PLASMAS ON TIMERS

Only in full operation during working hours. They go to sleep outside of working hours (evenings and weekends).

### OCTOPUS ENERGY

Our energy provider supplies 100% Green, renewable energy.

Since 1st July 2019 our 100% green electricity has resulted in **258kg LESS CO2 EMISSIONS** which is as much as 1264 trees absorb in a year.



### PAPER SHREDDING BINS

Placed alongside each photocopier, providing off-site, eco-friendly document destruction. 100% of the shredded paper is recycled.

### CAR SHARE SCHEME

Offered to all employees to promote lift shares and the reduction of vehicles on the roads.

### CYCLEScheme

Discounts on bikes and cycling equipment available to all employees, encouraging the team to cycle to work as opposed to other methods of transport - promoting fitness and health.

## ECO WASTE BINS

Bins in the office are split into general waste, and recyclable waste.



## WEEE RECYCLING BIN

At HQ a regular pickup for Waste Electronic recycling is in place for any legacy technology to be re-used/recycled.

Our WEEE Recycling partner operates a **ZERO LANDFILL POLICY** carried out under WEEE directive and BATRRT guidelines.



## PAPERLESS MENTALITY

Encouraged across the business. Our pay slips are digital only, all client contracts are signed digitally too.



## OUR 2023 ACHIEVEMENTS

We have taken several steps to encourage environmental benefits throughout our operations:

### LAUNCH OF REUTILIZE INITIATIVE

Recycling client aged endpoints and repurposing them to be used again by members of the community not fortunate enough to have access to technology.

### FORMATION OF SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

Comprising of employees within different roles throughout the business.

### CALCULATION OF OUR GREENHOUSE GASES

Initial calculation completed  
- Scopes 1-3.

# OUR ONGOING COMMITMENT

## SOCIAL

### WOMEN IN TECH PROGRAM

Offering in person talks or presentations to local schools to encourage, inspire and educate young ladies about the Technology Industry.

### PRIVATE MEDICAL INSURANCE

Via Vitality Healthcare.

**68 MEMBERS OF STAFF** completed a Vitality Health Review in 2023.



### FRESH FRUIT WEEKLY

Offered to employees to encourage nutritious eating habits.

### FREE COUNSELLING SERVICES

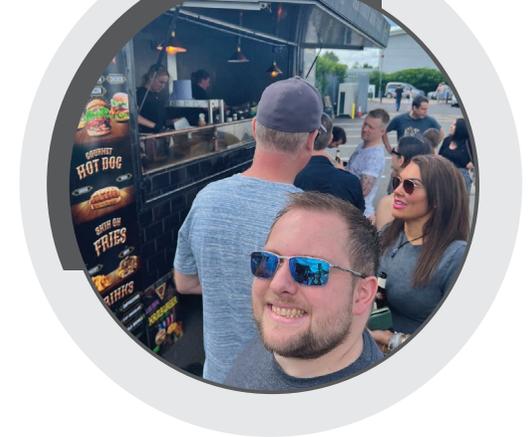
Available to all staff through a dedicated counsellor, as well as Vitality healthcare. This can also be expanded into families via Westfield Health.

### DEATH IN SERVICE BENEFIT

In the unfortunate but unlikely event death occurs for a staff member whilst they are employed, a nominated beneficiary will receive two years of full salary as one lump sum payment. All staff members are in control of who receives this benefit.

### BellyLAN GAMES NIGHT

Regular team building gaming nights held at HQ to promote relationships outside of work hours.



### #FEED THE TEAM

Monthly free lunches provided for team at HQ. Those remotely based are also able to claim a lunch on the same day if not able to make it in.

**540 LUNCHES** supplied to staff throughout 2023.



### MONEY OFF SHOPPING

With favourite brands, as well as discounts available at popular restaurants and eateries available via BHN (Blackhawk Network) and Westfield Rewards.

## 5-A-SIDE FOOTBALL

We support staff members who take part in weekly games local to the office, to encourage team building and good health and wellbeing.

**OVER 50** 5-a-side football matches played in 2023.



## COMMUNITY AND FUNDRAISING

Two Community and Fundraising Days are available per staff member per calendar year.

As an organisation we are committed to giving back to the community and encourage our team to help across a variety of initiatives.

We provide sponsorship of local children's sporting teams to supply seasonal kit.

We also sponsor local charity events, for example the annual Southend Half-Marathon for Havens Hospices and quiz nights.



## APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM

The Apprenticeship Scheme at Utilize, which started in 2015, has been managed by Elliott Wood for over 5 years. The team has seen success with 9 apprentices who have qualified under Elliott's guidance and gained full time positions within the business. The scheme provides apprentices with the perfect opportunity to learn whilst they earn.

Having apprentices who are trained in the 'Utilize Way' on all of our systems, makes it much easier for them to integrate into a full-time role with us at the end of their apprenticeship term. This also saves the cost of looking externally for recruiting services.

# OUR ONGOING COMMITMENT

SOCIAL cont.

## TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

10 days of Training and Development are included in all employees' contracts. This can also be increased subject to line manager approval based on requirements within the business.

These are tracked and reported monthly in the monthly all-hands meeting.

**550** Training and Development days used in 2023.



## TECHNOLOGY WORKSHOPS AND WEBINARS

Throughout 2023, we have hosted a series of Webinars and Digital Workshops with the goal of providing our clients with the knowledge and education needed to make informed decisions for their organisation. Some of the topics included are: Cyber Security, Power Automate Academy, Power BI Academy, Power Platform, ISDN Switch Off, Microsoft Copilot, and more.



## SOCIAL BUDGET FOR TEAM-BUILDING ACTIVITIES

An allocation of the company budget is awarded quarterly to all teams. This is to be used by the relevant team leader for extra-curricular team-building activities. This can be in the form of anything that will encourage the building of relationships between team members outside of work. We also encourage teams to partner up across departments periodically to further build and enhance relationships across the wider organisation.

Over **25** departmental teambuilding events in 2023.



## OUR 2023 ACHIEVEMENTS

### DEVELOPMENT OF WOMEN IN TECH PROGRAM

To operate as a mentor throughout 2023 on a voluntary basis.

### MENTORSHIP PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

For 2 Year 12 Students from local college.

### 'A DAY IN THE WORKPLACE' EVENT

We invited Y12 students from a local college into the office and showcased various roles, positions and areas of specialism as an organisation.

### ACHIEVED 'REAL LIVING WAGE' ACCREDITATION

A commitment we plan to continue throughout the coming years.

### ACHIEVED 'BASILDON GOLD EMPLOYER' CHARTER STATUS

A commitment we plan to continue throughout the coming years.

### APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

The team is now the biggest it's ever been with 4 concurrent apprentices soon to become 7.

So far in 2023, the Apprentice team have closed almost 4000 tickets between the 4 of them. The current 4 apprentices have an average feedback score of 4.84/5 between them, showing not only their fantastic work but also the fantastic customer service they provide.

### CHARITABLE EVENTS

Primary Sponsor of:

- Southend Half Marathon (Havens Hospices)
- Multiple Holiday lunch clubs (Kids Inspire)
- Essex County Business Quiz (Kids Inspire)
- HABS Boys' Elstree School entry and team to the VEX IQ Robotics Competition
- Local youth football coaching establishment (Corey Coaching)
- Local youth football team sponsorship (Basildon Town Youth FC, Basildon School District Boys and Girls teams)

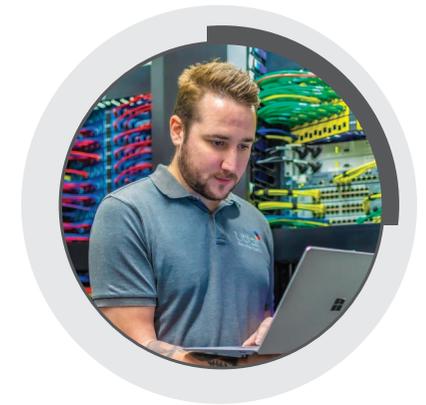
Office Charitable Events Hosted:

- Wear it Pink Day (Breast Cancer UK)
- Worlds Biggest Coffee Morning (Macmillan)

**£34,000** raised or contributed by or on behalf of the team at Utilize in 2023.



# OUR ONGOING COMMITMENT



## GOVERNANCE

### ISO14001:2015

ISO14001 is a framework that helps organisations be responsible relating to matters that impact the environment. It includes a focus on water use, energy use, pollution, waste and more.

Utilize has held this certification for many years and is audited annually.



### LEVEL 4 SERVICE AND OUTCOME FOCUSED SERVICE

Utilize has created a service-focused culture by establishing a common service language based on methodologies from a leading Customer Service training company, Hamilton Mercer.

The Level 4 framework clearly defines the approach and mindset taken by a representative to deliver the highest level of service when interacting with internal colleagues, clients and suppliers.

Establishing a common service language is not about introducing a raft of new jargon and buzzwords. In fact, it is quite the opposite. It's about ensuring that communication is clear and

understandable, solving problems quickly, reducing mistakes and being able to give objective feedback.

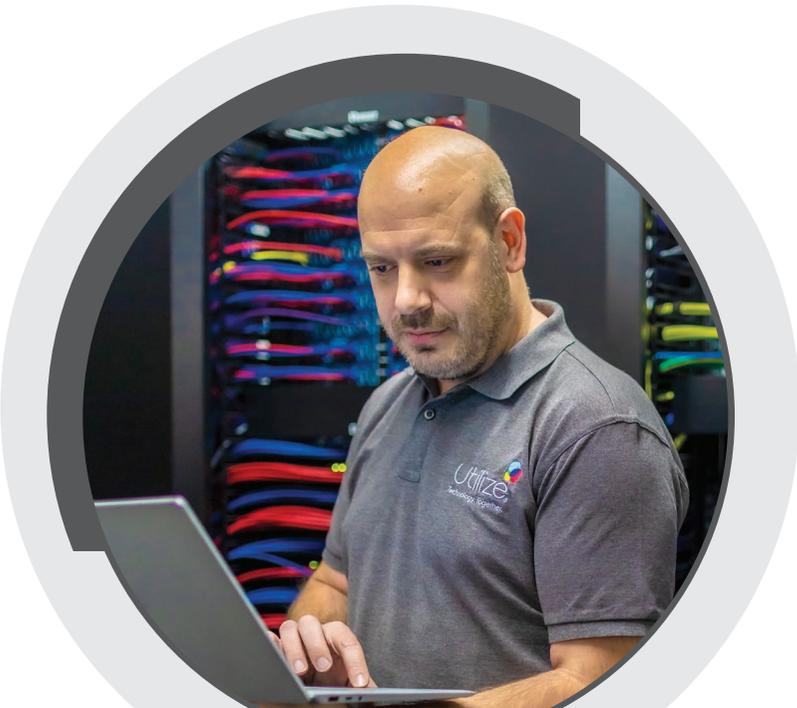
This methodology has been etched into the Utilize culture. The training is now part of all new staff inductions, meaning that customer service standards are clear, always improving, and that Level 4 benchmark standards continue to be maintained.

**PROGRAMME STARTED  
NOV 2021**

**ALL STAFF (120+) HAVE  
ATTENDED 2021/2022**

## CSAT SCORES (SERVICE)

CSAT Scores are a means of tracking engineer performance relating to support tickets. When a ticket is complete, we ask our customers for feedback relating to their experience, so we have a way to continually monitor and develop performance across the team. This allows us to praise our team when things have gone well and helps to highlight any training opportunities for future growth.



## OUR 2023 ACHIEVEMENTS

### LEVEL 4 SERVICE AND OUTCOME FOCUSED SERVICE

14 new staff have attended the training.

### MANAGEMENT TRAINING PROGRAM

Creating a Culture of Excellence  
- 20+ people leaders have attended.

### PARTNERED WITH TBL SERVICES

To provide expert advice from a sustainability expert.

### ONBOARDED THE ENEXO REPORTING SOLUTION

To assist with the collation of carbon emissions and benchmarking against suppliers, partners, and competitors.

# OUR 2024 PLEDGES

## SOCIAL

### ENVIRONMENTAL

#### TRACK AND RECORD OUR CARBON EMISSIONS

Consistently track and record our emissions with the aim to generate a baseline, and then reduce them.

#### LAUNCH OF FOOD WASTE RECYCLING SCHEME

Currently food waste in our office goes into the black bin bags, rather than being recycled and correctly broken down. Whilst we already perform regular recycling, this will improve on current activities.



#### IDENTIFY A 4<sup>TH</sup> COMPANY CHARITY

To create greater impact either overseas or globally.

#### HOLIDAY BUY BACK AND SELL INITIATIVE

An initiative to give staff greater control and flexibility over how much annual leave we take each year with the aim to improve the work / life balance, productivity, and wellbeing of our team.

#### DESIGNATE 12 MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AIDERS (MHFA)

Creating change around mental health is a complex task that requires a multi-tiered approach. Having employees gain the knowledge and skills to spot signs of people experiencing poor mental health in the workplace is very important.

## EXPAND NUMBER OF MEDICAL FIRST AIDERS

Presently we have 3 first aiders  
- double this to 6.

## PUBLISH OUR FIRST DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION STATEMENT

Section to be included in future versions of this report, or as an independent statement.

## £40,000 FOR GOOD CAUSES

To be raised via donations, sponsorship and fundraising.

## SUBSIDISED NUTRITIOUS LUNCHES

To be launched and delivered at Utilize HQ.



## PERFORM INITIAL APPLICATION FOR B-CORP CERTIFICATION

We are committed to making a change and have begun the rigorous assessment to join this movement.

## COMMIT TO RELEASING AN ANNUAL SUSTAINABILITY REPORT

The evolution of our journey over 2024, and our plans for the future.



## FEEDBACK

Your feedback is important to us as it helps us to identify what is working well and understand the issues that are affecting you. This helps us decide on which improvements, if any, we can make.

Should you require any aspect to be explained in more detail, please reach out to our Sustainability Committee, who will be happy to assist. The team can be contacted at [sustainability@utilize.co.uk](mailto:sustainability@utilize.co.uk)



### ESSEX OFFICE

Utilize House, Benthalls, Basildon, Essex SS14 3BX | T: 0333 006 9060

### LONDON OFFICE

8 Devonshire Square, London EC2M 4YJ

[info@utilize.co.uk](mailto:info@utilize.co.uk) | [www.utilize.co.uk](http://www.utilize.co.uk)

