



lil creative studio

01
Impact Report
2022-2023

Introduction

Welcome to the first Lil Creative Studio Impact Report.

This report explores who we work with, the types of projects we undertake, and the impact our work has on both people and the planet. It is a reflection on our journey so far, from where we started to how far we've come. It highlights how our values drive us to create designs that are not only visually compelling but also environmentally and socially responsible. We also shed light on the differences our projects are making in the community – whether it's through raising awareness on important issues, supporting local initiatives, or contributing to environmental sustainability.

Finally we will look at how Lil Creative Studio itself is committed to giving back. Through various initiatives, we aim to lead by example, showing that it is possible to run a business that prioritises people and the planet over profit. By assessing our current actions and their outcomes, we are setting the foundation for playing our part in the creation of a 'Better Business' world.

Claire Steele

Founder & Creative Director

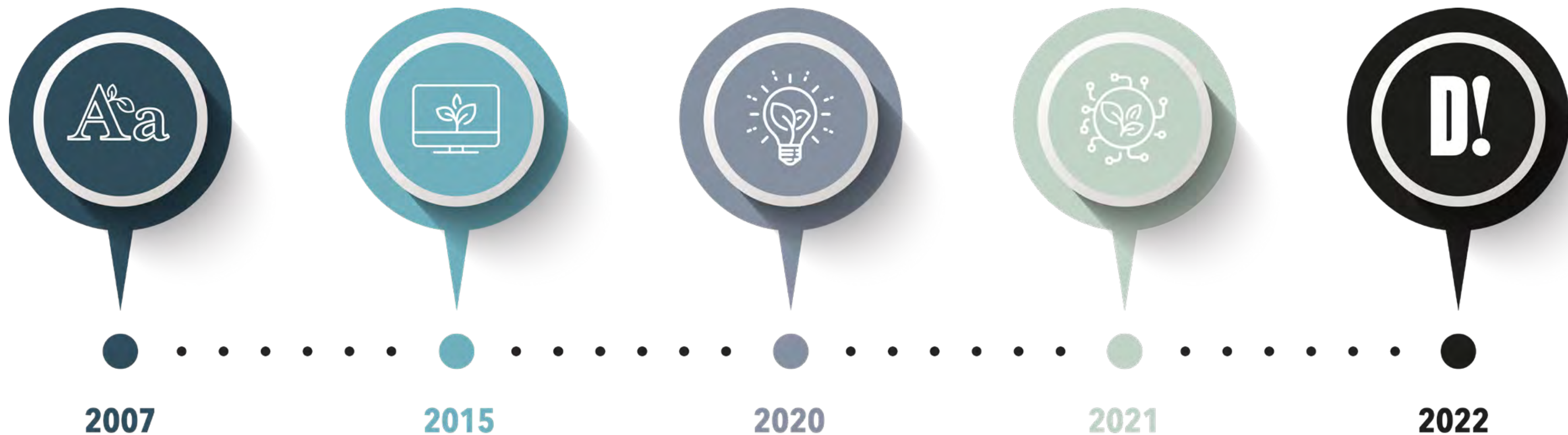
Lil Creative Studio

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**A journey of a thousand miles
begins with only one step**

- Lao Tzu

How we got here



Claire founded an ethical design for print company with a colleague. They focused on

SUSTAINABLE PRINT

establishing a system of rating every print job in 5 areas. This empowered clients to make sustainable print decisions within their budgets.

Claire moved to the Lakes and founded Lil Creative Studio. As the business moved from print to digital, Lil Creative Studio introduced

GREEN HOSTING

finding a UK based ethical hosting provider with green data solutions and a commitment to better business.

Claire started as a business advisor to Future Fixers CIC and then joined as a director. This lead to

CERTIFICATION

with Green Small Business, an EMS standard and small business alternative to ISO 14001.

A chance comment during certification with Green Small Business led Claire down the never ending rabbit hole exploring

DIGITAL FOOTPRINT

As the world moves online, the impact of our digital world has increased exponentially. We pivoted the business to focus on low impact digital design.

One result of the pandemic was networking moved online, and we were able to connect with like minded designers through

DESIGN DECLARES

In October Lil Creative Studio signed the newly established Design Declares campaign, which brings together designers, agencies, and institutions to raise awareness and instigate action in the design industry.

Who we work with

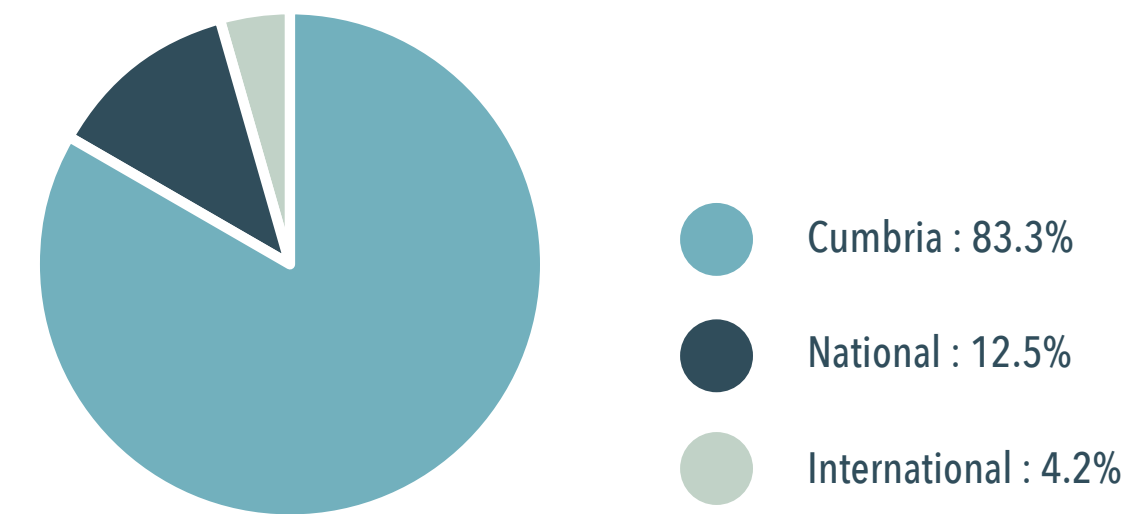
Clients

At Lil Creative Studio, we work with a diverse range of clients spanning the Arts & Culture, Charity & Not-for-profit, Corporate & eCommerce sectors. While it might seem like we don't specialise in one area, our true focus is on the people we partner with rather than the business itself. We firmly believe that meaningful change comes through genuine engagement. Our goal is to empower employees to drive change within their organisations.

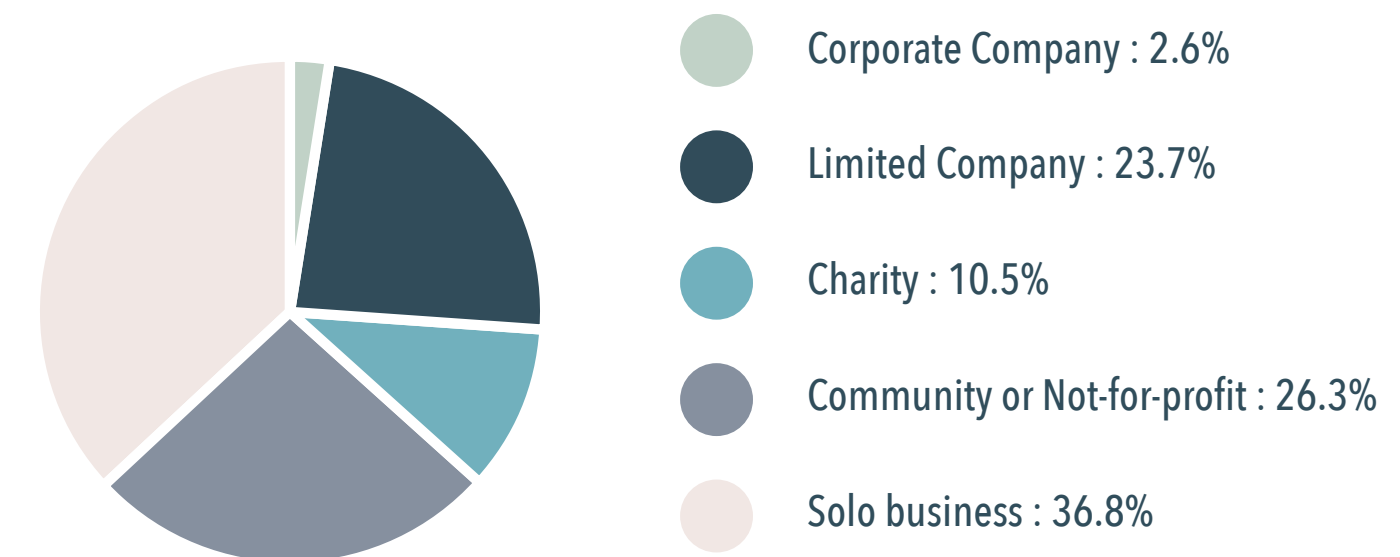
This focus on people means we tend to work with small, independent businesses and charities who place a higher value on customers and the environment rather than profit.

During this survey one consistent observation has emerged: over half of our clients of our clients share the common goal to make a positive impact for people and planet.

LOCATION



BUSINESS STRUCTURE



DO YOU CONSIDER YOURSELF PURPOSE LED?



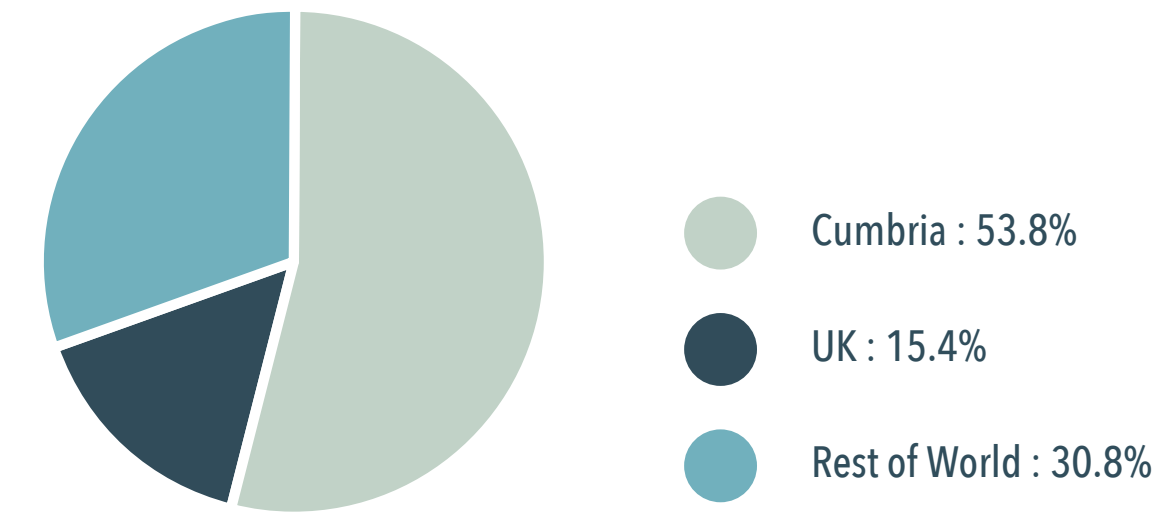
Suppliers

Our suppliers are as important as our clients. It is essential that we work with companies who hold similar values as ourselves and who believe in what we do.

We prioritise:

- Local, independent business. Living in a rural area in the north west of the UK we feel it is very important that we support the local business community.
- Environmental sustainability accreditation. We look for industry accreditation eg: ISO 14001, to Woodland Trust to B Corp etc
- Strong environmental sustainability commitment. We recognise not every business has the opportunity to gain industry accreditation so look to work with businesses that are implementing positive practices; environmental sustainability or moving towards circular and/or regenerative
- Strong social commitment. We look for people actively looking to support local, national or international community
- Minority lead business eg. women owned, lbgtq+, ethnic minorities

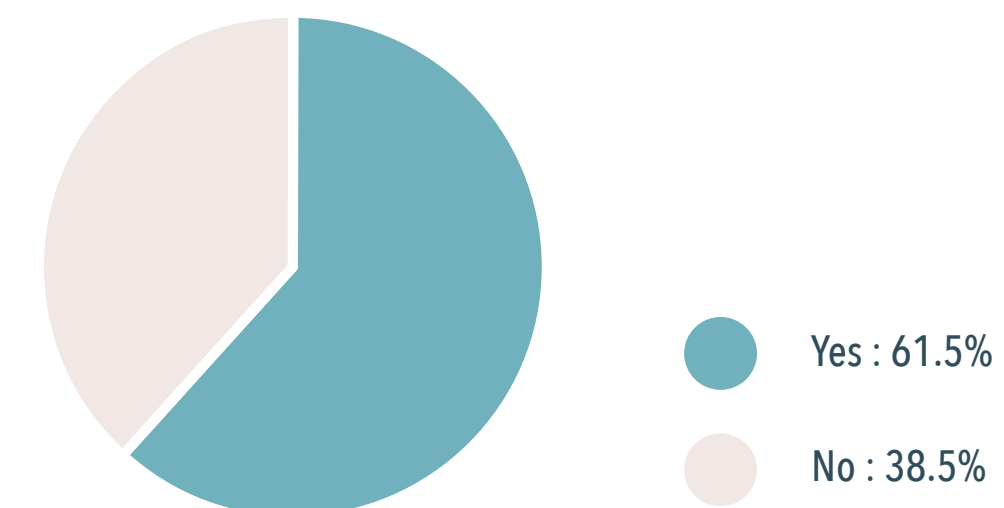
LOCATION



DO YOU HAVE AN ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITMENT?



DO YOU GIVE BACK TO THE LOCAL COMMUNITY?

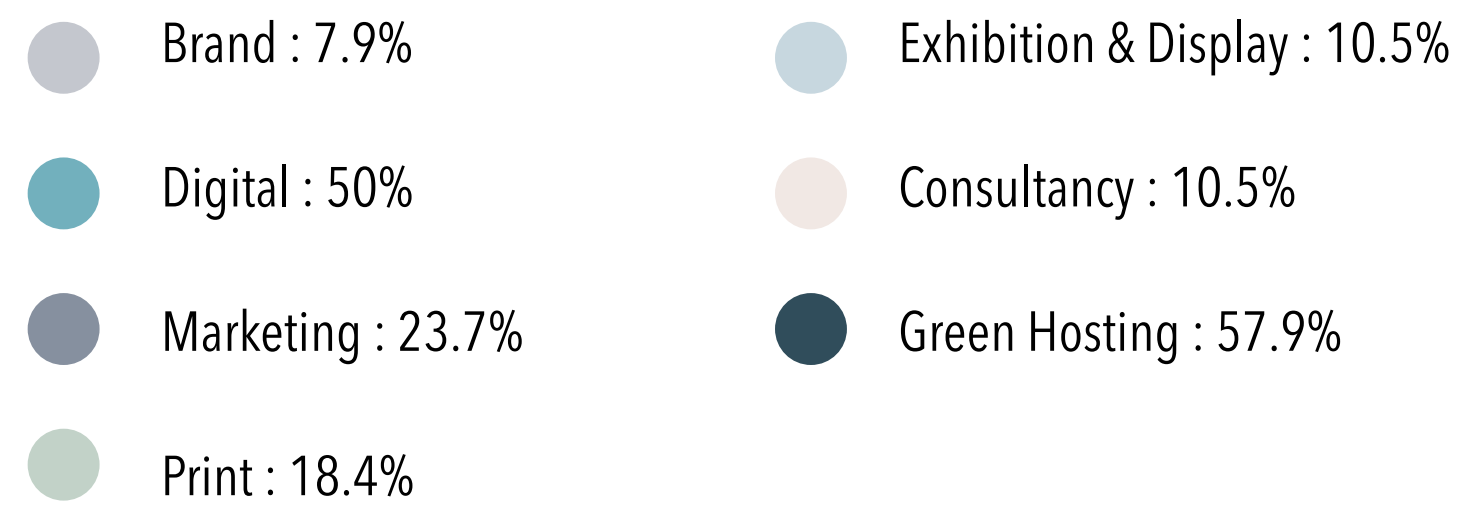


Type of work

The best thing about being an independent design studio is the range of work we able to undertake and deliver. This prevents monotony, ensures our designs remain fresh, and enables us to adopt a holistic approach to all projects. Our deeper understanding of how these projects translate across the various design fields further enriches our creative process.

We are primarily communication designers, our objective is always to effectively communicate our clients message directly to their target audience.

The past year has highlighted just how much digital work we produce, and how many of our clients have shifted to Green Hosting with us.



Environmental impact

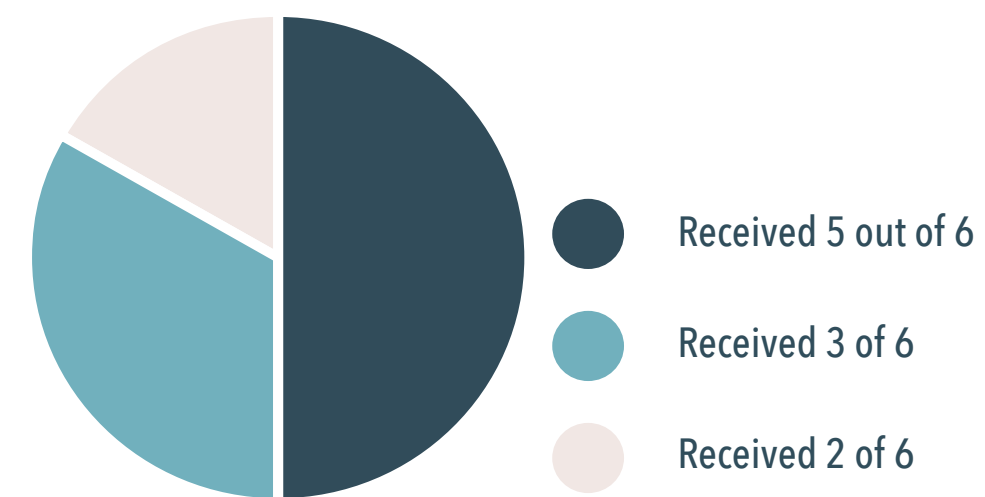
We have a deep understanding of the environmental impact associated with our print work, knowledge honed over 15 years working with fellow designers, printers, and paper merchants.

When it comes to **Printing** we give all our projects marks out of 6 for their environmental credentials. These marks are based on: 1. Printer Accreditations, 2. Energy Source, 3. Locality to client, 4. Paper stock, 5. Inks used, and 6. Is the end product recyclable?

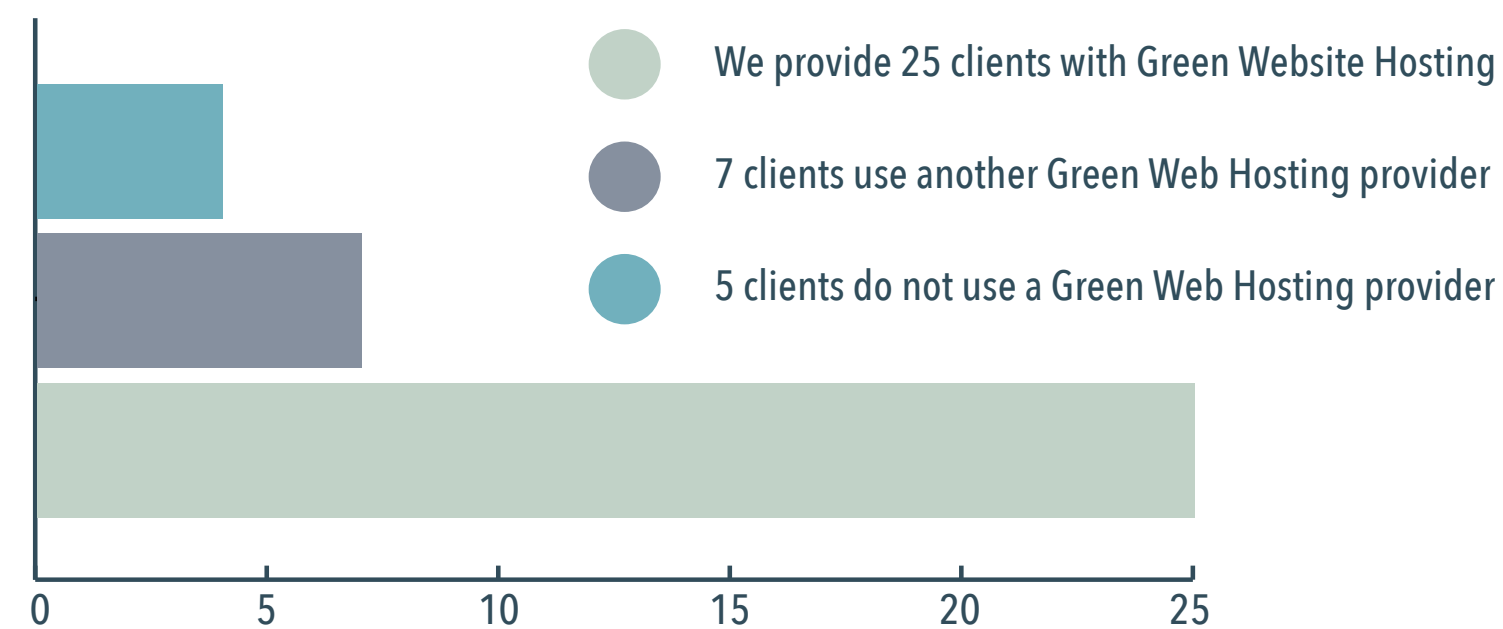
We have been providing **Green Hosting** to our clients since 2018. We use a UK based hosting company who believe it is one thing to use renewable energy, but it's even more important to use less power. For clients who don't host with us we aim to steer them towards a green hosting provider.

When it comes to **Website Design** it's only in recent years we have begun to examine the environmental impact of our digital work. This transition has involved a steep learning curve, and we continue to gather insights as the technological landscape evolves and advances. Globally, the average web page produces approximately 0.8 grams CO2 equivalent per page view. Our goal in 2022/2023 was for each website to average under 0.4g CO2e.

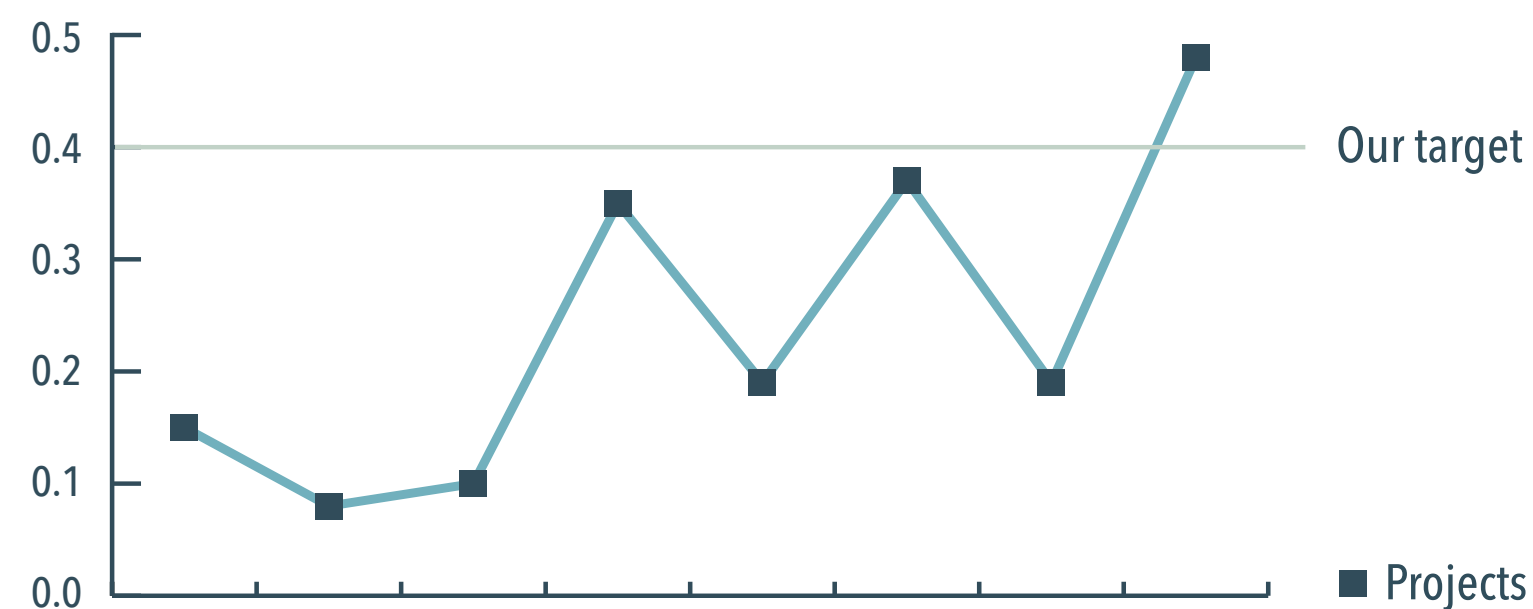
PRINTING



GREEN HOSTING



WEBSITE DESIGN



Project impact

In many contemporary workplaces data analysis informing output and driving performance is considered essential. While metrics and data-driven strategies may benefit certain businesses, they are not at the core of our approach.

Our focus is on the tangible actions of our clients and how our design work supports their endeavours. Not every initiative is transformative; some aim for modest achievements, impacting a small group of people, while others lay the groundwork for future progress. Nevertheless, each action makes a meaningful difference to at least one individual or community, and we believe that is of immeasurable value.

57.9% of our clients consider themselves purpose led and here are some of the purposes they put forward:

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Supporting unpaid carers in the South Lakes

Enabling solutions for a Water Positive future

Transformational technology for green solutions

Supporting people from disadvantaged communities to access the arts

Preserving local history for future generations

Supporting start-ups to embed Good Values into the core of their business

Supporting women in business

Extending the lifecycle of children's clothing

Supporting people in their journey for end of life care

Enabling affordable and sustainable homes

Helping companies improve their social impact

Investing in support and resources for Young People in Cumbria and Lancaster

Nature Restoration

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Giving back

There are three main aspects of business philanthropy: the giving of time, money, and resources. Like many businesses embarking on their journey to make a positive impact, we initially started by making annual donations to environmental charities.

However, as we've expanded and our commitment to doing more has intensified, and the ways in which we strive to create a positive impact have evolved.

In 2022/2023, we supported two impactful charities through donations:

- **Carer Support South Lakes**, a small local charity dedicated to supporting unpaid carers in the South Lakes.
- **Ecologi**, a national charity focused on global reforestation and habitat restoration.

In 2020, Claire joined **Future Fixers CIC** as an unpaid co-director, helping start-ups incorporate Good Business values into their core operations. By 2022, Claire's commitment to Future Fixers CIC included volunteering one full day each month as an unpaid business advisor.

During this time, Claire offered valuable design, website, and marketing guidance to local businesses.

Inspired by her experience, we expanded our monthly #designtips articles, aimed at helping small businesses in Cumbria, into **#designchats** – online monthly business advisory sessions.

This is our first impact report. The first time Lil Creative Studio have really had a look at who we work with, the type of work we do and the impact that work has made.

It is easy to see the holes, to focus on what we are missing and where we can be better. But we feel we should be proud of what we have achieved and be excited to plan what we want to do for the future.

**“It’s about the journey,
not the destination”**

CLIENTS

We will continue to prioritise working with businesses local to Cumbria, and with those further afield that have a strong environmental or people-focused mission. While not every business may be purpose-led, we believe every business can embrace good practices.

Our aim is to inspire more clients to integrate these values into their core operations.

Ultimately, we strive to help businesses and organisations connect with their target audiences, making a meaningful impact on those they serve.

SUPPLIERS

Partnering with Cumbria-based businesses not only strengthens our local economy but also fosters the close working relationships that can be lost in purely online transactions.

We are committed to expanding our design supplier network with local businesses, particularly in design support services. We are also passionate about providing opportunities to young people and female designers, helping them break into a competitive and often male-dominated industry.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF WORK

Although we produce less print work than before, we remain dedicated to using materials that ensure our products are either reusable or recyclable.

Our key focus will be exploring the environmental impact of digital design, a rapidly evolving area. Over the next year, we aim to deepen our understanding of the technology and science behind it and implement best practices.

PROJECT IMPACT

We would love to share more insights about the impact of each project we undertake, as well as the overall effect our clients have on their audiences and the environment. Moving forward, we will explore ways to gather and share this information, highlighting the incredible work our clients are doing for people and the planet.

GIVING BACK

We plan to keep supporting a local and national charity through ongoing monthly or annual donations. Claire will maintain her role providing business advice with Future Fixers CIC, working alongside the other directors and associates. Additionally, we are exploring ways to evolve #designchats to collaborate with businesses in a more focused and strategic manner.

Claire Steele

Founder & Creative Director

Lil Creative Studio
