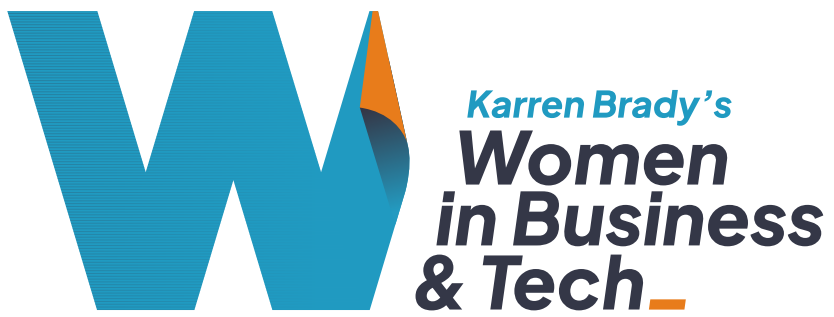




Sustainability: Progress Over Perfection

How the smallest changes can have the biggest impact





Karren Brady's
**Women
in Business
& Tech**

EVENT Q+A



Sustainability: Progress Over Perfection

**How the smallest changes can
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To B Corp or not to B Corp?





What resources are there out there for small businesses that might be less cost, less time, but the right thing that our customers, partners and audience should do to get on their sustainability journey?


Ilana Lassman, Head of Social Impact and Corporate Sponsorships, UK&I. [Dell Technologies](#)

The way we started our sustainability was actually using the **B Impact Assessment** which you can all access for free from the B Corp website. It's a really great framework for measuring where you sit, and you get a benchmark. It really was as easy as doing it on my mobile with a glass of wine and that's where I started, and it was totally free.



Polly Buckland
Founder, [The Typeface Group](#)





Nancy, do you want to give us an overview of what B Corp is and why it's beneficial for small businesses and for large businesses and any organisation.

Ilana Lassman, Head of Social Impact and Corporate Sponsorships, UK&I. [Dell Technologies](#)

B Corp is a great certification. **It's kind of one of the few that has a holistic view, so you are looking at your environmental impacts and also your social impacts as well, so how you impact your communities and your workers.** As Polly said, you can access the framework completely for free and it's a great way to have some external verification on what you're doing. It's accessible for all sizes, you can be a one-woman or man band or up to a big corporate. It's really accessible to different sizes as well.





Faye, do you want to give an overview of why you might have chosen not to go for B Corp?

Ilana Lassman, Head of Social Impact and Corporate Sponsorships, UK&I. [Dell Technologies](#)

My core principles and goals are around people and planet, and how we can have the best impact on the planet. We are still small and built up from nothing, so the big thing to take on here is if you are not, it is no reflection on you or where your business is at. **There are plenty of things that you can do to be sustainable without having the tag, per se, and you should celebrate all the small wins.** That's what we do at **Beevive**, and for us, it was about laying the foundations first and building the resources and investment to then do it at a later time. Perhaps it's a 'when' not an 'if', but if you are sitting here thinking 'I would love to be there', just congratulate what you have done so far, and you know that's a good goal.

Faye Whitley
Co-founder, [Beevive](#)





Emma coming to you, within your business, are you seeing B Corp as a positive or negative?

Ilana Lassman, Head of Social Impact and Corporate Sponsorships, UK&I. [Dell Technologies](#)

B Corp came around because there was someone called Bart Houlahan in America, and he set this company up where they had really good employee rights, they were allowed collective bargaining, they were allowed all of these kinds of benefits like having the best carers leave, paternity leave. His company was tiny but it did really well, and he sold it for quite a lot of money because he wanted to start another company. But the people who bought the company stripped away all of the wonderful things he had put in place and bizarrely, or not so bizarrely, the company became not so profitable.

Emma Littlewood

Co-founder and Strategy Director

[Compare Your Footprint](#)

part of Green Element Group



He decided to get together with other like-minded business leaders and put in place something that would protect businesses from that happening, and that's what B Corp is. However, it's a very high bar for SMEs. **There are 5 and a half million companies in the UK and 90-95% of them are Small to Medium-sized Enterprises that don't have the resources.** Even if it's not fiscal resources but don't have the human capital to do this stuff. There's a lot that you can do, which we will come onto go into later, that isn't such a high bar certification, but it is about taking action and it is about future-proofing your business against climate change and other sustainability impacts.

Emma Littlewood

Co-founder and Strategy Director

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Sustainability: Progress Over Perfection

**How the smallest changes can
have the biggest impact**

**How to measure and report on your
environmental impact**



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B E E V I V E

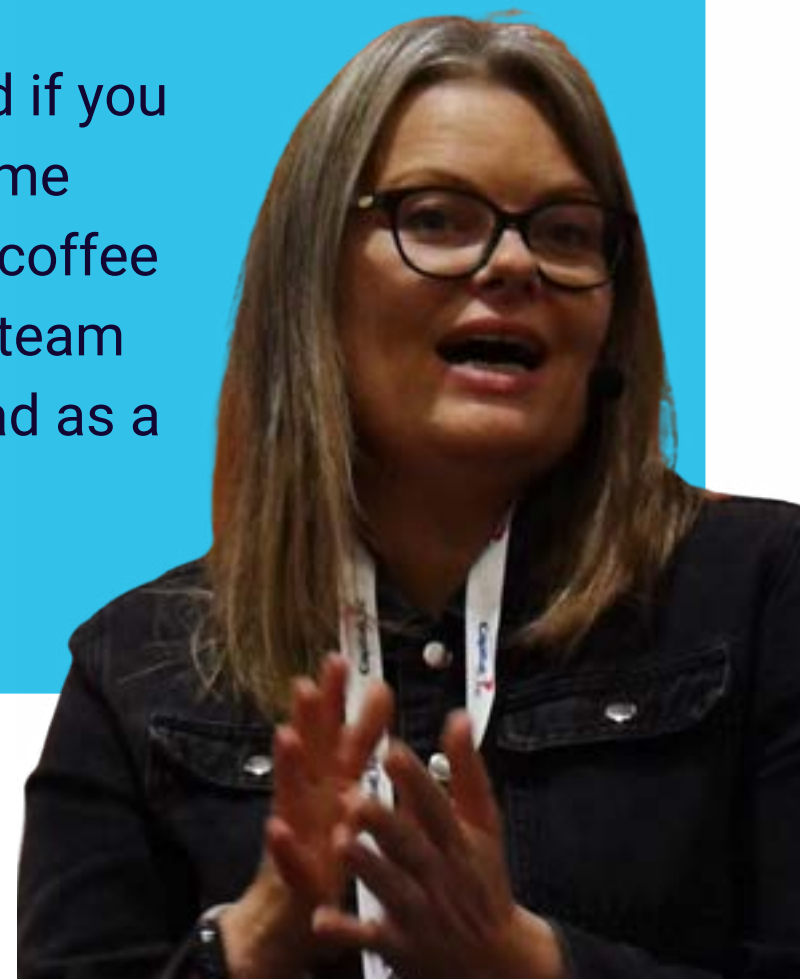


So Polly, asking you the question of reporting and measuring, how are you doing it and do you have any tips for businesses on how they can start measuring their data?

Ilana Lassman, Head of Social Impact and Corporate Sponsorships, UK&I. [Dell Technologies](#)

It's really important to get buy-in internally because it can take quite a lot of work to get your head around and to get the measurement right, so we gave our studios more time to become responsible as a sustainability lead. We'd never done sustainability before, so it was quite a learning curve. **I would recommend having a look out there for calculator-type products. We actually chose Compare Your Footprint, and it's a really great way of putting in what you know at that time and getting the data visualisations out the other end.**

Once you get those measurements in place, communicate within your impact reports and if you have a benchmark to put through, there's some really surprising measures in there. Like our coffee habit, the Starbucks we were getting for our team was one of the biggest emissions that we had as a business, so if you are measuring it you can really see what impact you are having.

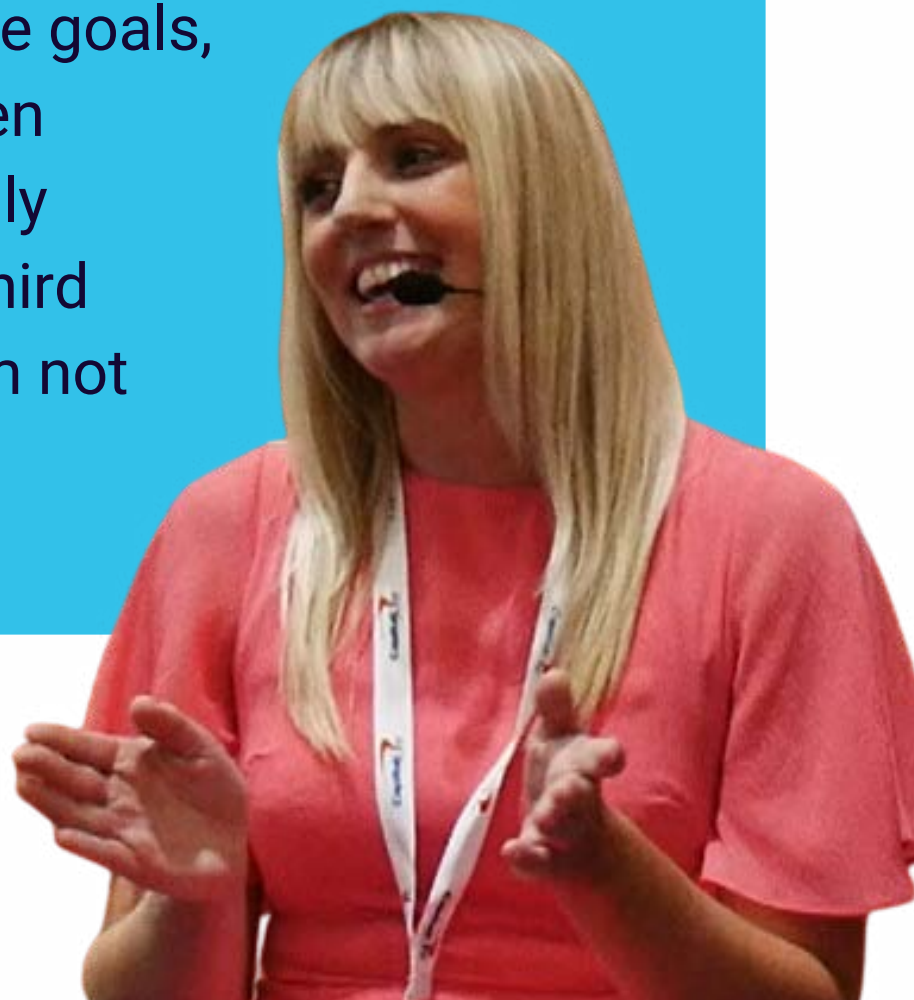




And Faye, are you seeing that the goals that you are measuring are aligned to the next steps of what you want to grow within your business?

Ilana Lassman, Head of Social Impact and Corporate Sponsorships, UK&I. [Dell Technologies](#)

So, we set short-term and long-term goals and if you do it very simply on a spreadsheet that's fine, if you find a way that works for you just do it. **It's really important to set some kind of deadline for it so you can review it and analyse it. The other thing that I found really helpful and making us accountable is sharing that journey with our community.** So community was at the heart of it when we started, and that education process of setting the goals, sharing that with our customers, then reviewing it with them, that was really pivotal for us, and with the help of third parties, you are able to calculate. I'm not a maths person, but these girls are, so it's great. Delegate!



Faye Whitley
Co-founder, [Beevive](#)



If you are a sole trader, you might not have that community at the beginning. How do you suggest to the audience that they can really look at how to implement sustainably as a sole trader?

Ilana Lassman, Head of Social Impact and Corporate Sponsorships, UK&I. [Dell Technologies](#)

I run a consultancy that supports businesses through B Corp and I have also put my business through the B Corp process as well. **It can feel a bit strange sharing processes with yourself and signing them off as yourself, but it really helps cement what you stand for, what your values are, how you want to operate, and again it's using the B Corp framework.** You've embedded all this into your processes, not something you've got to rejig or rethink further down the line, which has its challenges. Also, I found that with certain clients it was really useful when I was doing project bids, particularly if we were working with councils or government-funded money, that having those policies in place really articulates your values and how you operate.





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How to tackle supply chain emissions






Faye, you're a manufacturer, how are you finding ensuring sustainability of both manufacturing and product?

Ilana Lassman, Head of Social Impact and Corporate Sponsorships, UK&I. [Dell Technologies](#)

From a product perspective, there are many ways that you can look at it. I would say firstly you can take one product and one service you have and look at the life cycle of that, so where are all the raw materials coming from, how are they being farmed, who is making your product, how are they being used. Are you willing to elongate the longevity of that, for example being able to refill or re-use it and how does it get recycled and disposed of? That whole chain is the social impact of your product. **It's very daunting to look at the entirety of your business, so you just take each piece and you take it and break it into as many different parts as you can.** That's how we approach it from a product point of view.



Faye Whitley
Co-founder, [Beevive](#)



Have you ever gone through the manufacturing process with a supplier and said, we don't want to work with this provider because of sustainability reasons?

Ilana Lassman, Head of Social Impact and Corporate Sponsorships, UK&I. [Dell Technologies](#)

Yes, but I also see it as an opportunity to educate. Sometimes they don't actually realise what they are doing and that's better as it's an opportunity to be like 'hey, I don't know if you realise this.' For example, one of our products, our bee revival kit is made from bamboo. We wanted to source something and use a different type of material and we asked if we could use a different type of material. They asked us if they could coat it with a lacquer which would then make it unbiodegradable. **That was an opportunity for me to say, we can't do that. So instead of dismissing them, that's an example of how it's worked for us and drives forward better business overall.**

Faye Whitley
Co-founder, [Beevive](#)

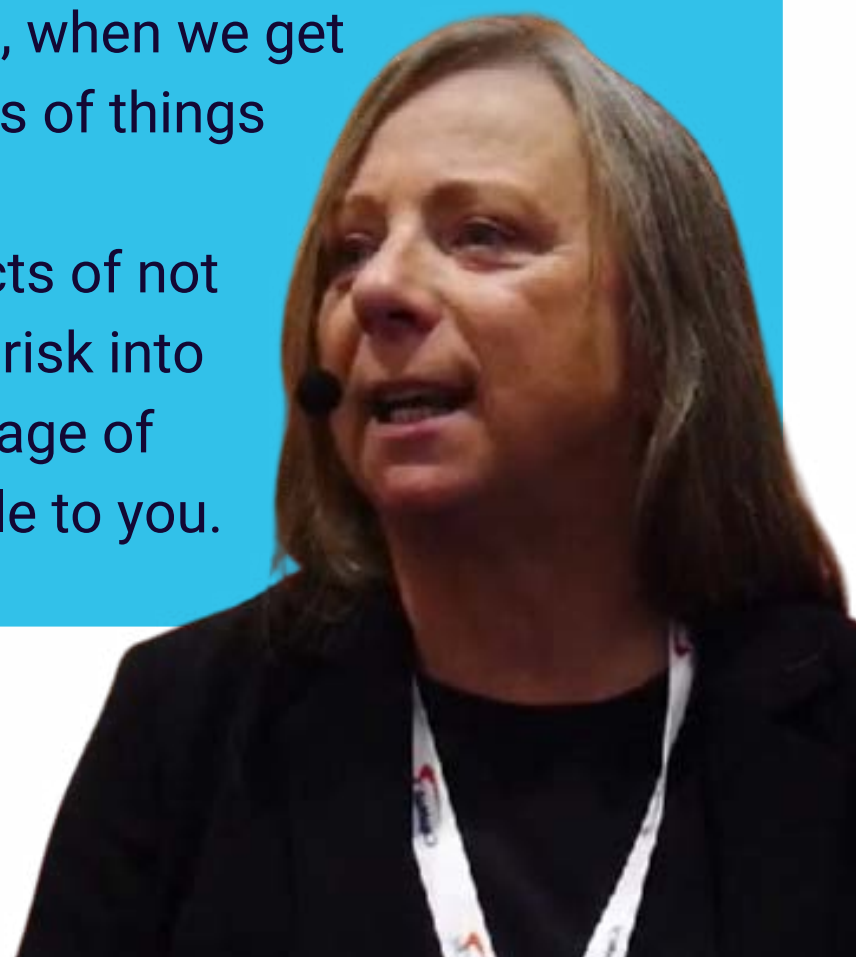




And Emma from a services perspective, what are you seeing in business with sustainability? Are you seeing that with your clients as well?

Ilana Lassman, Head of Social Impact and Corporate Sponsorships, UK&I. [Dell Technologies](#)

I think at this juncture it's quite good to zoom out and see sustainability perhaps with a long-distance lens. Sustainability has always been there it's if your business can survive. **Sustainability is really survivability and futureproofing yourself against the worst impacts of climate change. It can feel something quite esoteric and theoretical when in fact there are a lot of things out there that can aid you whether you are in manufacturing or services.** There are lots of grants available that may not be so available right now, but if you go on the **Government's website** you can see the grants that have been available. These will be refreshed, we hope, when we get the next administration in. But there are lots of things you can do to futureproof yourself against sustainability impacts and the worst impacts of not being sustainable, and embedding climate risk into your business model, just by taking advantage of the free tools and services that are available to you.



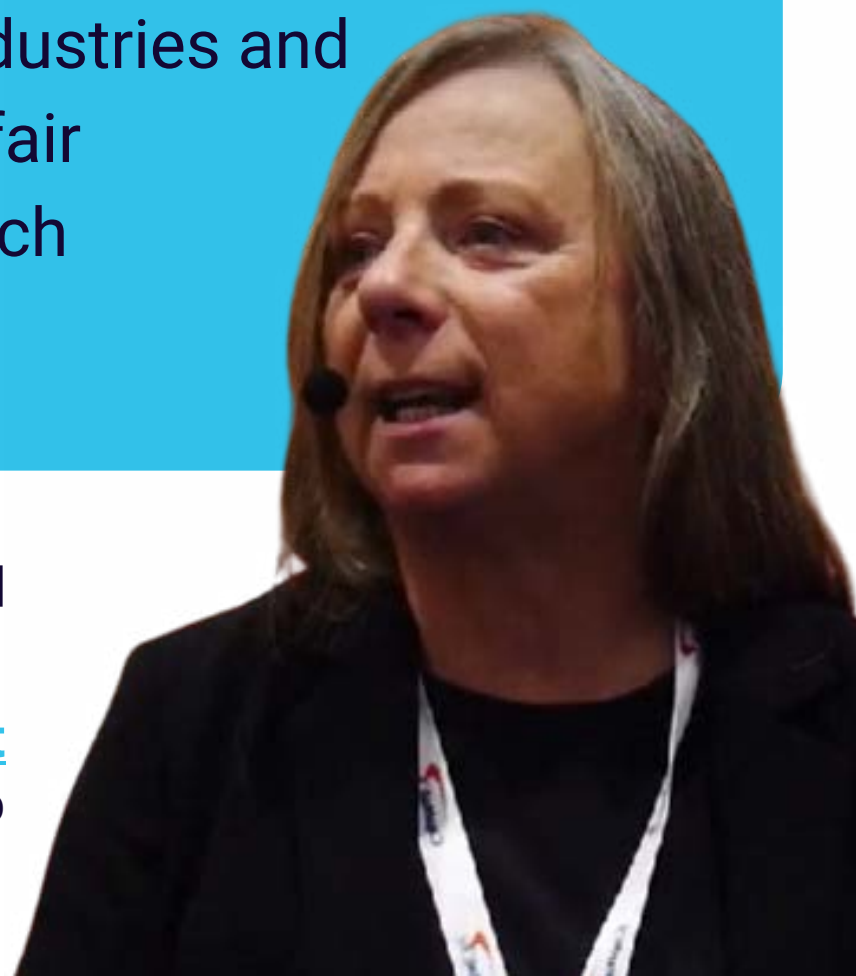
This really applies whether you are in the services industry, or in the manufacturing industry – what's inside the products and services. It's obviously a bit different and people say, well what can we do? We are in a shared building, we don't do anything, and we don't have any business travel. **But if you get together as business leaders, it's all about collaboration and community and seeing what you can do together, like reaching out to landowners to give you their data.** There are lots of things out there, like [Octopus](#) which offers certain grants for electric vehicles, and all sorts of sustainable infrastructure for domestic and the business place, so in general there's a lot of cross-over between service industries and manufacturing industries, but to be fair manufacturing industries have a much more complex supply chain.

Emma Littlewood

Co-founder and Strategy Director

[Compare Your Footprint](#)

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How do you see technology being a part of that journey, is it regenerative AI, or is it the actual product itself? Looking at our products, is it the laptops and the manufacturing process of those laptops? How is tech really changing the game for sustainability?

Ilana Lassman, Head of Social Impact and Corporate Sponsorships, UK&I. [Dell Technologies](#)

I do find that tech is a massive game-changer. **There's something called the SME Climate Hub, it's a UK Government venture. It's completely free, you can go on there and it has a very good calculator to calculate carbon emissions, but there are also lots of other free resources.** So that's one tech provision. And companies like Dell, we have lots of organisations who purchase products from Dell. They provide something called an **environmental product declaration**. You can download it from the website and you know what the embodied carbon emissions are with that computer compared with another computer. You can use that to make choices. Obviously, you are always going to want to get the cheapest and best value, but what we are doing here is to align the cheapest and best value with the most sustainable.



Emma Littlewood
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Top tips on getting started with sustainability



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I work with a lot of different businesses across a lot of different industries, and I promise you they are all coming back with the same challenges. Be open, be transparent, and invite collaboration. Don't get so overwhelmed and do nothing. **We all make mistakes, it's progress over perfection. No one is perfect, get started, collaborate, have conversations, and get off the starting board.**

Nancy Hyne, Founder, [True Horizon](#)



We've spoken about B-Corp, that we don't have to have the badge to make change. For us we track the little things; we have a sustainability scrapbook – it's ultimately a slide deck. So our sustainability leads are over there crunching the numbers with **Compare Your Footprint**, we're saying oh we didn't use that supplier for that reason, or we selected this venue for this event, or we chose this stand or this strategy for our event for the right reasons. **So measure and acknowledge the small stuff you are doing because it all really adds up. It doesn't matter if you have a badge at the end of it. You are creating a better business for those small changes.**



Polly Buckland
Founder, [The Typeface Group](#)



We are a massive organisation. We have 130,000 employees worldwide and we are not there yet, and every time we want to achieve another goal we will go and look for another one. **So it doesn't matter if you are a small to medium enterprise or one person, getting on that journey is the most important thing.**

Ilana Lassman, Head of Social Impact and Corporate Sponsorships, UK&I. [Dell Technologies](#)



The fact you are all sat here because being here is technically a step in front of the other, and I've found it so easy myself to feel judged. If I tell people what I'm doing and I'm not doing it right then they are going to judge me. So the learning that happens in that process is so important.

So just lean in and try not to feel judged by other people and share your learnings and pass it on. As soon as I learn I want to pass it on. I hope you all take that with you and give yourself a pat on the back.



Faye Whitley

Co-founder, [Beevive](#)

Use the free resources. SME Climate Hub and Compare Your Footprint. We offer it free to micro businesses. Even more importantly than that there's another organisation called **Business Declares**. I really recommend signing up to Business Declares. They do everything you would expect, so it's Business Declares a Climate Emergency and we all get together. What we are doing more of lately is actually campaigning. **Businesses can't do it all on their own, we need government to get behind us and support that. We get together and we organise.** If anyone wants to find out any more of the resources mentioned, then please get in touch and those will be provided to you.

Emma Littlewood

Co-founder and Strategy Director

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