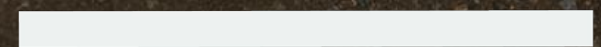


Carbon Gold Impact Report 2020-21

Certified



Corporation[®]



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Introduction

Carbon Gold was originally founded by Craig Sams, founder of Green & Blacks Chocolate, back in 2007 as an organic, biochar-based, peat free planting aid. His co-founder was Dan Morrell, founder of the Carbon Neutral Company

Biochar is a high-carbon form of charcoal that is produced by “baking” organic matter at high temperatures and in the absence of oxygen, a process called “pyrolysis”. Because of its carbon purity it doesn’t degrade, so by introducing it into your soil, it can bring a physical and permanent change. In the soil biochar encourages a resilient soil microbiome, which supports healthy plant growth and increases the sequestration capacity of the soils.

Biochar itself also sequesters (locks) carbon into the soil, reducing the CO² levels that would otherwise be released into our atmosphere.



Who we are and what we do

Back in 2007, we were perhaps a little ahead of our time! There was little understanding and even some scepticism of biochar's actual benefits to soil and plant health. We have spent much of the intervening years winning over the sceptics and proving its benefits through numerous third-party scientific trials, resulting in our products being adopted by the commercial crop growing, tree care and sports turf sectors.



In actual fact the earliest known use of biochar was by the pre-Columbian indigenous people of the Amazon over 2000 years ago, so you might say in terms of soil health it is the newest oldest thing around!.

tropical
soil



Terra Preta (Black Earth) can still be found in the region today and is still providing a healthy, nutrient rich substrate for farmers in a region of the world known for its highly infertile tropical soils.

Terra Preta
(Black Earth)



In 2020 when Covid-19 appeared for the first time and went on to have such a dramatic impact on all of our lives, the horticulture industry actually experienced a mini-boom. With rigid lockdown restrictions in place, more and more people turned to their gardens for both their mental and physical wellbeing and a new generation of gardeners was born.



The flip side was that the commercial sector, especially the landscapers and arboreal (L&A) sector had all but ground to a complete halt by the end of 2020.

We had to rethink our strategy given that our business model was so reliant upon this commercial sector. Ironically the cause of the problem also offered the solution. The mini-boom it had created provided the ideal opportunity for Carbon Gold to launch our products to the consumer retail market for the first time, bringing the long term benefits of biochar to everyone.



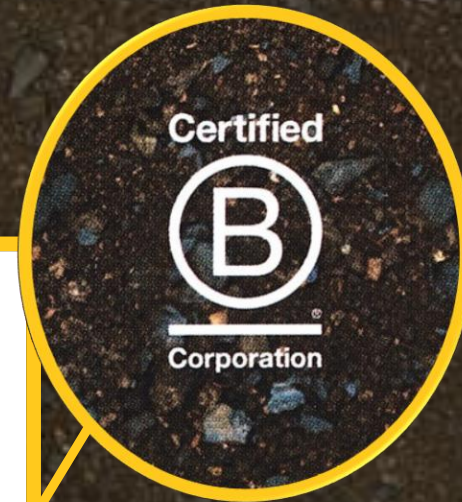
Proud to be part of the growing B Corp community



Our B Corp journey started back in June 2018, when we achieved B Corp certification for the first time with an overall impact score of 83.1, a good score for such a small business.

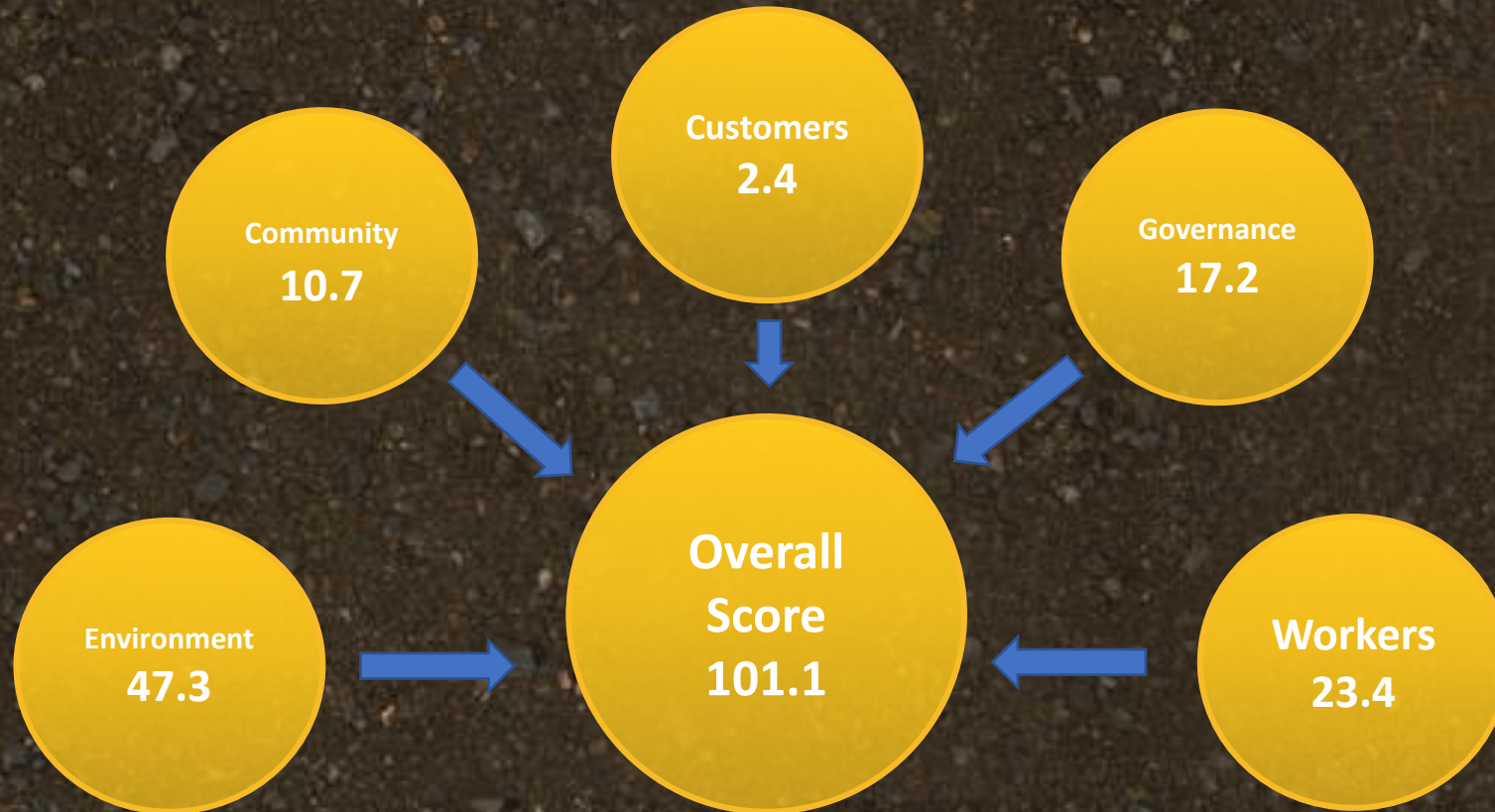


We were also thrilled to be included in the *B Lab Best for the World 2019* list, which honours the top-performing Certified B Corporations overall as well as within each Impact Area.





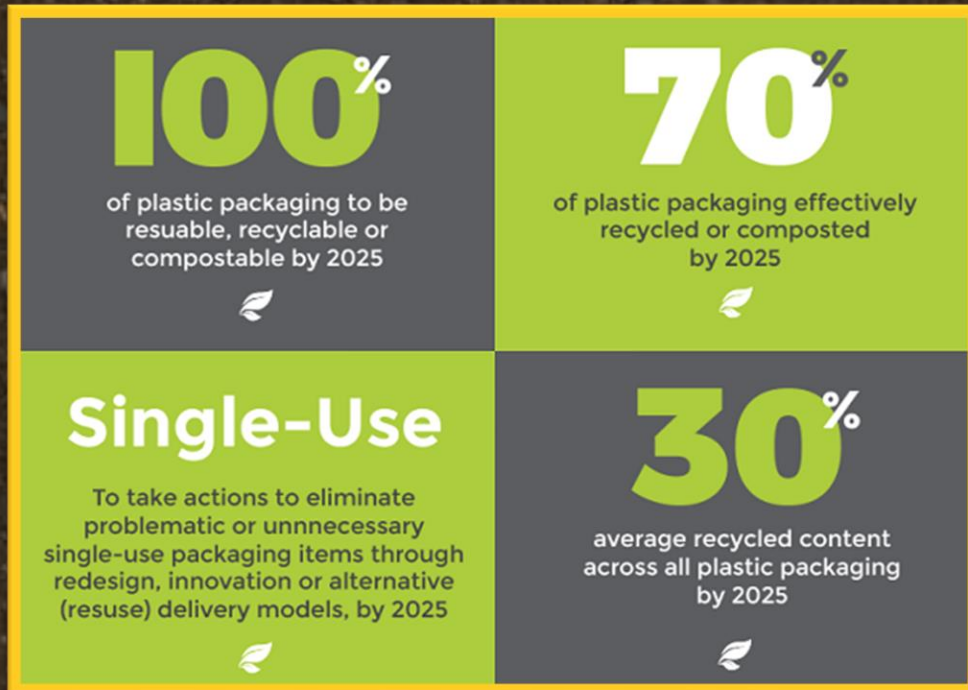
Three years on, we successfully re-certified with a B Impact Assessment score of 101.1 in November 2021. This improvement really reflects the hard work of our team since our original certification in continually finding ways to improve the impact of our business for our stakeholders and the environment.





Our Environment

Packaging and its impact on our environment has become a key element within our design process. Along with our B Corp status, we are signatories to GIMA's Plastic Packaging Pledge. The pledge establishes a set of targets for all GIMA members to work towards reducing our reliance on single-use plastic packaging and to improve rates of recycling and reuse



The pledge states that by 2025, all members will:

- remove identified “problem plastics”
- eliminate unnecessary plastic packaging
- 100% of all plastic packaging to be reusable, recyclable or compostable
- 70% of all plastic packaging to be effectively recycled or composted
- 30% average recycled content across all plastic packaging

Our Environment

As part of this process, during 2021 we removed all black plastic from our range of products, replacing them with new recyclable cardboard cartons instead.

Our smaller products are in transition and are now available in clear PP5 recyclable tubs. Our plans are to phase these out replacing them with cardboard cartons by 2024.

Compost bags remain a challenge due to the nature of the product and that it is commonly stored outside making compostable bags inappropriate. We are working together with our packaging suppliers to find more suitable, environmental alternatives.

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Our Environment

We were thrilled to certify as carbon neutral at the end of 2021, achieving this voluntary status in partnership with Consequence

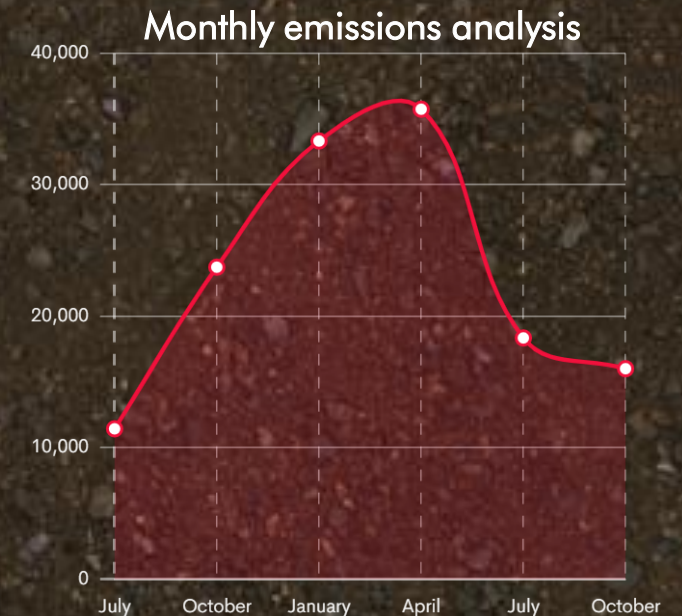


Along with changes to packaging and the introduction of a more streamlined manufacturing process; we also made major changes to our supply chain, including switching the bulk of our raw materials and supply base to domestic, UK based suppliers, favouring local and fellow B Corp companies wherever practical.

Following our “work from home” experience during lockdown, we realised that we could have a long-term beneficial impact on the environment by switching to this on a permanent basis. In doing so, we have removed many of the Scope 3 emissions associated with supplying and servicing an office environment; and have also been able to dispose of our company vehicles. Additionally we no longer have the long and arduous daily commute into central Bristol, which saves on car and transport emissions and has also been very beneficial to our team, helping us all establish a much healthier work/life balance!



Even so, like most businesses we will still produce some unavoidable GHG emissions and whilst we continually work towards reducing these further, we now voluntarily offset our carbon footprint each month by supporting a selection of projects verified under the Gold Standard Verification Emissions Reduction (GS-VER) which only verifies carbon offset projects in developing countries, specifically those projects involved with renewable energy and energy efficiency, along with the United Nations Clean Development Mechanism (UN-CDM) certified offset projects. These offsets help provide crucial funding for these important projects allowing them to thrive whilst making us carbon neutral.



Insights for Carbon Gold Ltd.

1 October 2021 - 31 December 2021

Total carbon footprint ①

16 tCO2e

Total carbon offset ①

16 tCO2e

No. of emission categories ①

4

The number of GHGP categories of emissions found in your business.

Non-GHGP transactions ①

25 transactions

Transactions that are not covered by the GHGP categories.



Our offset certificates provided each month show details of the projects we have supported.

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Our Community

Over the past 18 months we have worked hard to make our business more inclusive, adopting an approach that means our whole team is involved in what we do. This is arguably easier for a small business such as ourselves, but nonetheless, no less important and has helped create a sense of both ownership and pride in what we collectively do and achieve.



We have adopted a process of formal monthly team meetings where we discuss strategy, plans and operational issues, encouraging everyone to have a say. It sounds obvious and although we have always had meetings, this is a more structured and formal basis. An excellent example of this benefiting the business was seen with the impact of such a collaborative approach in creating our new retail packaging. We were able to take on everyone's opinions, ideas and feedback which resulted in a design that we felt would appeal to a wider consumer base – it also looks better!



Our Community

We have also completely changed the structure and ownership of our business.



Early 2020 we completed a crowd funding project with the help of Crowdcube, this opened up ownership of our business to anyone and everyone who wanted to be apart of our story. The final results reflected over 1000 new investors.

Over 60% of our new investors were able to take part with an investment of less than £100. Our team members were also able to be involved at whatever level of investment they could afford; so we were delighted to have a 100% take up rate with the whole team investing and now owning a little piece of our business.

We also changed the structure of our board of directors, with our long standing USA based directors stepping down and being replaced by two new UK based directors, one a long standing employee and the other, invited from the pool of our new share holders. Our board make up has also changed and is no longer 100% male based.

Our Community

We have always tried to support our local community where we can and whilst for any small business this may be limited in financial terms, we do what we can with regular product donations.

During 2020 our normal level of activity in this area was somewhat curtailed due to lockdown measures, but we were delighted to be able to support the Larkhall Residents in Bath with their efforts to say "thank you" to key-workers by regenerating some drab old concrete planters (see following page), with donations of our biochar-based, peat-free compost and soil additives, their HOPE theme rejuvenated these planters bringing life and brightness to what had become dull and unsightly to the benefit of the local community and passers by.

We have also implemented a "Charity Day" available for all staff. This is a scheme whereby any member of staff can take additional day's paid leave to support a registered charity of their choice. This could be helping down at the local foodbank or volunteering for a day at a WWT centre, whatever appeals to them individually or collectively.

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THE LIFE AND SOIL OF LARKHALL!

Larkhallians have been busy making a planty tribute to all of those who have seen us through the pandemic, in particular the traders, but also front-line workers.

As a gardener, for years I've wanted to tip all of the weeds out of the Larkhall Square planters and start again. From the help I've received in restoring the planters, it seems many local people felt the same way. What better time to do it than as we head out of the lock-down.

First things first. What would Larkhall like in them? "A herb garden would be great" said Tom from the butchers. "I love what they've

done on the London Road with grasses" said one of his colleagues. Jan and Don said "We'd like a bit of colour" while Morag, who often comes and sits on the bench by the planters told me "As long as there is plenty for the Bees". "Make sure you have something green in winter", said Jenni.

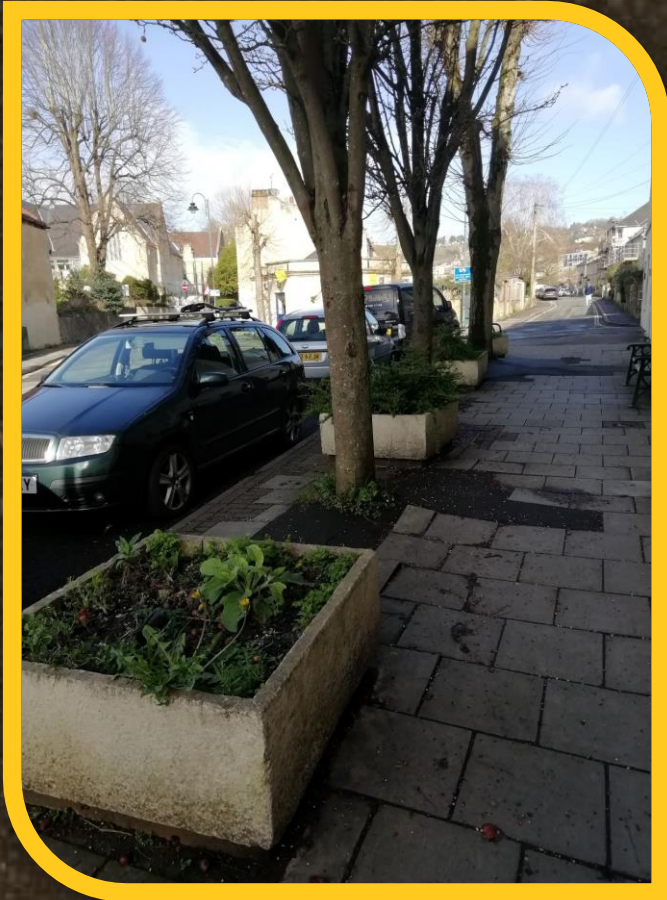
The challenging thing was the light ... or lack of it, which limited the type of plants we could use.

The 'People's Planters,' needed to be generous and uplifting to celebrate Larkhall's resilience during the pandemic. They also needed to be peaceful for those who'd lost loved ones to Covid, but also reflect the community spirit and creativity, offering hope for the way forward.

A big thanks must go to our biggest donor Carbon-Gold for the wonderful compost and bio-char. Gardenalia, the local shops and cafe

All our advertisers you saw them in The Local Look

Larkhall residents thank front-line workers for community effort



Tree Rescue Campaign

We created a national tree nomination campaign to support and celebrate much loved, veteran trees. An online platform was provided that allowed people to nominate any significant, veteran or ancient tree that required support for continual growth. The top five trees would qualify for free assessment and treatment using the a special pioneering Vogt GeoTech Injector that enables the tree surgeons to fill cavities with organic fertiliser such as our enriched biochar. Using a single probe that penetrates the soil into the root zone, up to a depth of one metre, a void is created that is then filled with Carbon Gold's enriched biochar.



The introduction of our biochar into the root soil brings all of the long term benefits in terms of water-holding capacity, stabilising soils, whilst boosting soil fertility allowing trees to grow strong, healthy root systems in the harshest conditions.

Bexley Charter Oak



- “We weren’t expecting such a dramatic turnaround so quickly, especially with an organic product. We know from experience that chemical treatments and over-fertilisation can have a good short-term effect but actually worsen a tree’s health in the long run, so we were intrigued by the science behind enriched biochar and the geo-injector application process. I have to say, it was the best decision we’ve made in terms of the Charter Oak’s health!” **Philip Louis, Tree & Woodland Officer, London Borough of Bexley**

Our People

- Our team structure has changed over the past few years and we are now comprised of a 50-50 male/female ratio
- We have adopted and implemented a series of new policies providing for Equal Opportunities, Mental Health & Stress, Parental Leave & Family Emergency along with Modern Slavery & Human Trafficking along with several other key areas.
- Following changes made during lockdown we have adopted a 100% working from home policy on a permanent basis and introduced flexible working practices to help our team ensure a healthy work/life balance.
- Inclusive management – our board is now fully UK based 2 men/ 1 woman; previously made up with 2 US based directors, who have now been replaced with UK stakeholders.
- Regularly monthly meetings involve the whole team in key decisions, planning and the evolution of our strategic plan.



*Founder & Executive
Chairman Craig Sams*

Our Future

We are proud of the improvements that we have made to our business over the past couple of years and the resulting beneficial impact that we have made for our stakeholders and the environment, but it must not stop here. We have some very clear goals for the future.

- We will continue to promote awareness of the benefits of using biochar for improving soil health, but this also needs to move to a larger, agricultural scale therefore helping to overcome the continual erosion of the worlds topsoil and create a more vibrant healthy way to grow crops.
- The sale of peat for gardens will be banned by 2024 but there is more to do, we are now working to encourage commercial nurseries to find alternatives to peat as well, they are not obliged to cease using peat in their processes by the ban and so can continue to use peat with the plants that they grow and supply to garden centres.
- We will continue with our target of reducing reliance on any form of plastic within our packaging, fulfilling our GIMA Packaging Pledge.

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Our Future

- We want to complete our drive towards removing the use of plastic from all of our packaging wherever possible. This will be hugely challenging, especially where our compost products are concerned but we continue to research the new and innovative developments that are constantly being made in the packaging world to find a solution.
- Having achieved carbon neutral status, we have now embarked on our drive to be Net Zero by 2025, we are already offsetting against some of our Scope 3 emissions but there is more to be done. Our priority is to reduce rather than offset, and we continue to work towards this goal.



CARBON GOLD[®]

Saving the planet, one garden at a time



100%
PEAT
FREE



WHY USE OUR BIOCHAR?

- Improves soil health & condition ✓
- Helps reduce your carbon footprint ✓
- Long term benefits for soil & plants ✓
- Retains moisture so less watering ✓

www.carbongold.com

100% peat-free composts, soil improvers and rejuvenators
Contact us at info@carbongold.com and 0117 2440032

