

# Annual Impact Report 2024



Good for the planet.  
**Good for business.**





## From our CEO Bruce Bratley

At First Mile, our purpose is to recycle waste from businesses to slow down climate change. We help over 30,000 organisations to reduce their waste, improve recycling rates and manage their waste sustainably. As a result, we're delivering positive impact for the planet, our customers and the communities we serve.

2024 was another milestone year for First Mile. In partnership with our growing customer base, we avoided over **103,000 tonnes of CO2e through recycling**.

We were honored to be named **Independent Operator of the Year** at the MRW National Recycling Awards, a recognition of the hard work and innovation that goes into everything we do—from customer support to cutting-edge tech and logistics.

Internally, we've made great strides in reducing our own carbon impact. We've expanded our fleet of **electric cargo bikes**, enabling zero-emission collections in more urban areas, and rolled out smarter **route optimization using our proprietary tech platform, Miley**, to cut road miles and improve efficiency across our logistics network.

We also accelerated the deployment of **RecycleID™**, our unique waste tracking system, across many more customer sites—bringing full transparency and data-driven insights to commercial waste management like never before.

With the government's changing environmental legislation, including **Simpler Recycling** and the **Deposit Return Scheme**, businesses are under growing pressure to act. At First Mile, we will continue to support our customers with innovative services and solutions to help them stay ahead of the curve.

Looking ahead to **2025 and beyond**, our mission remains clear: to make it simple for every business to reduce their environmental impact and play a part in building a low-carbon, zero-waste economy.

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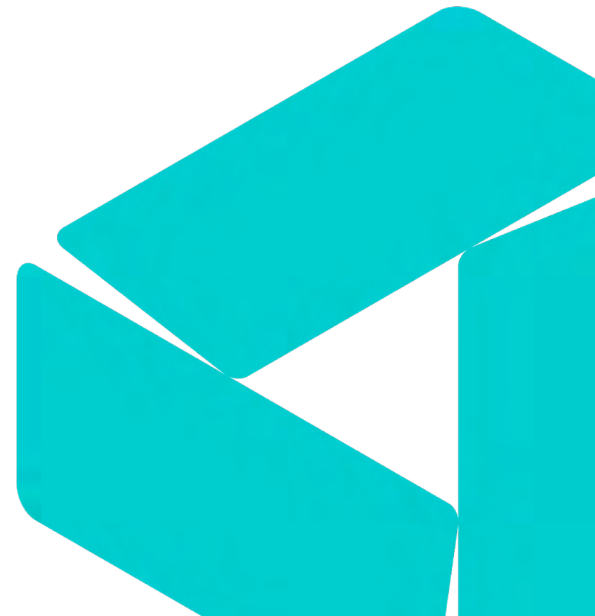
## Planet

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# 01 Introduction





# Our purpose and values

Our purpose is to slow down climate change by helping businesses to recycle. Our mission is to deliver innovative waste and recycling solutions to businesses that mean they can maximise their impact, whilst saving time and money.

By putting our customers at the heart of what we do, we continually find ways to help them to reduce their waste, boost recycling rates and drive cost and time saving efficiencies.

The carbon impact of using recycled materials to manufacture new products is much lower than using virgin materials.

Recycling helps to avoid carbon emissions, reducing climate impact.



## Our Mission

To slow down climate change with smarter waste solutions that help businesses to recycle more



## Our Vision

A waste-free world

## Our Values

Our values underpin everything we do



Amaze Customers



Love the Planet



Be One Team

**Good for the planet. Good for business.**



# 2024 Highlights

**-45%**

Lower carbon  
impact than industry  
average

Welcomed fantastic  
new partners  
including:



**JACQUEMUS**



HereEast

**40**

LEADENHALL  
LONDON

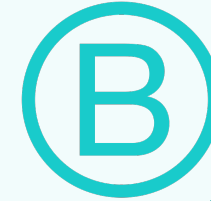
**wework** **PANDORA**

**amazon**



**Borough Yards**

**Certified**



**Corporation**

**50+**

Waste and  
recycling services

**20k**

Collections per  
week on electric  
cargo bikes

Acquired  
Redbridge  
Council's business  
waste services

London Borough of

**Redbridge**



**40**

Different  
nationalities  
employed at  
First Mile

**+9k**

Record number  
of new customers



**Named  
Independent  
Operator of the  
Year**



**mrw  
National Recycling  
Awards 2024**

26 November | Hilton Metropole London

**103k**

Tonnes of CO2e  
avoided in 2024



# Our approach to sustainability

How we deliver better impact:



## Planet

### Better Recycling

Continuing to develop our sustainable business model that encourages the transition to a circular economy, and supports businesses with constant innovation and recycling solutions.

### Greener Operations

Reducing the impact on the environment from our own operations. Reducing our combined scope 1 and 2 emissions -42% by 2030. Decarbonizing our fleet through cargo bikes and electrification of compactors and vans, while expanding the capacity of our proven pre-sorting facility.

### Sustainable Supply

As more customers engage online, we'll transition to greener data centres, set clear environmental obligations for ourselves and our landlords, and ensure full traceability of waste to prevent overseas disposal.



## People

### Our People

Social initiatives to support our team, community and customers, who we depend on to succeed in our environmental mission.

### Our Customers

Provide customers with seamless waste management and better weight data through our portal and provide education and engagement resources, training, and thought-leadership to set them up for success.

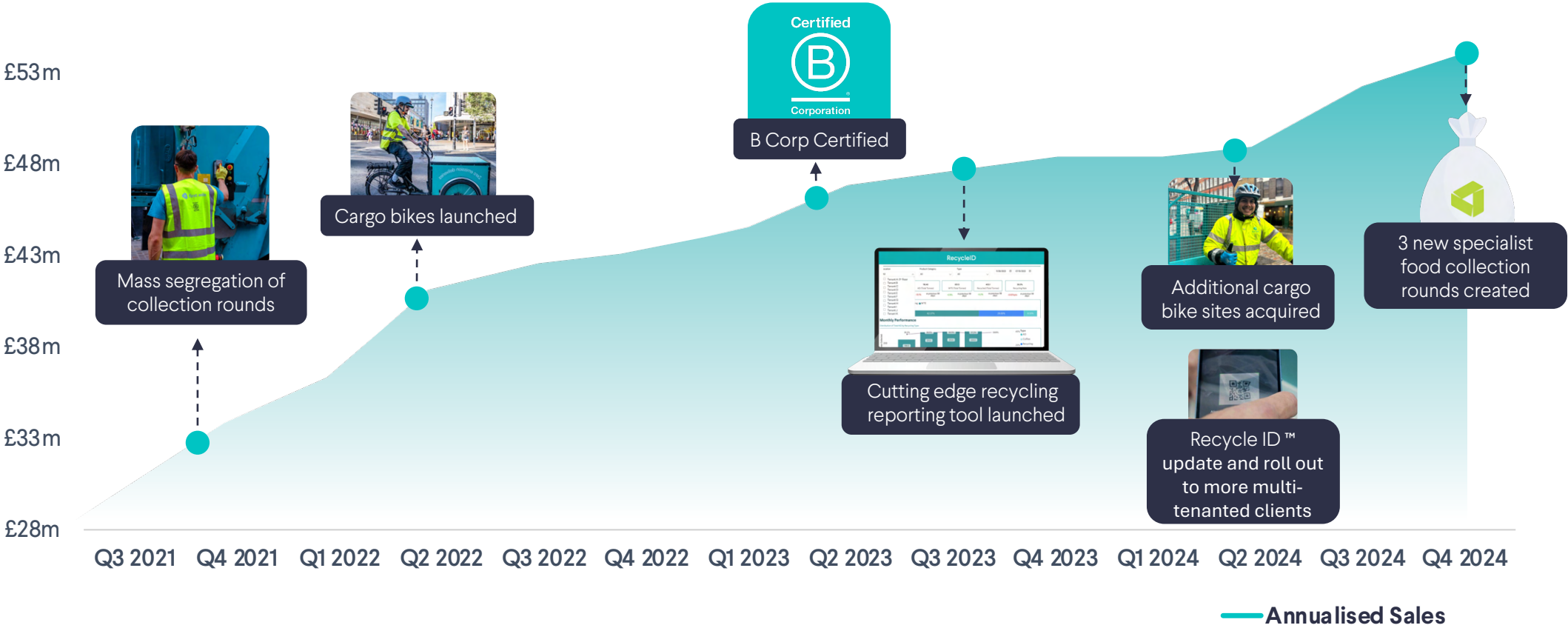
### Our Community

We are proud to be a local London business, dedicated to serving and supporting our community. We partner with 57 Business Improvement Districts, and volunteer and donate to local charities.



# Sustainability Initiatives Timeline

We provide industry-leading sustainable waste solutions.  
Our growth is fuelled by our dedication to innovation and initiatives with positive environmental impact.





# Our B Corp assessment

In 2023 we certified as a B-Corp, scoring **88** on the B Impact Assessment. We scored higher than the industry average in all of the 5 categories. We will be looking to improve our score when we re-certify next year.

Certified

B

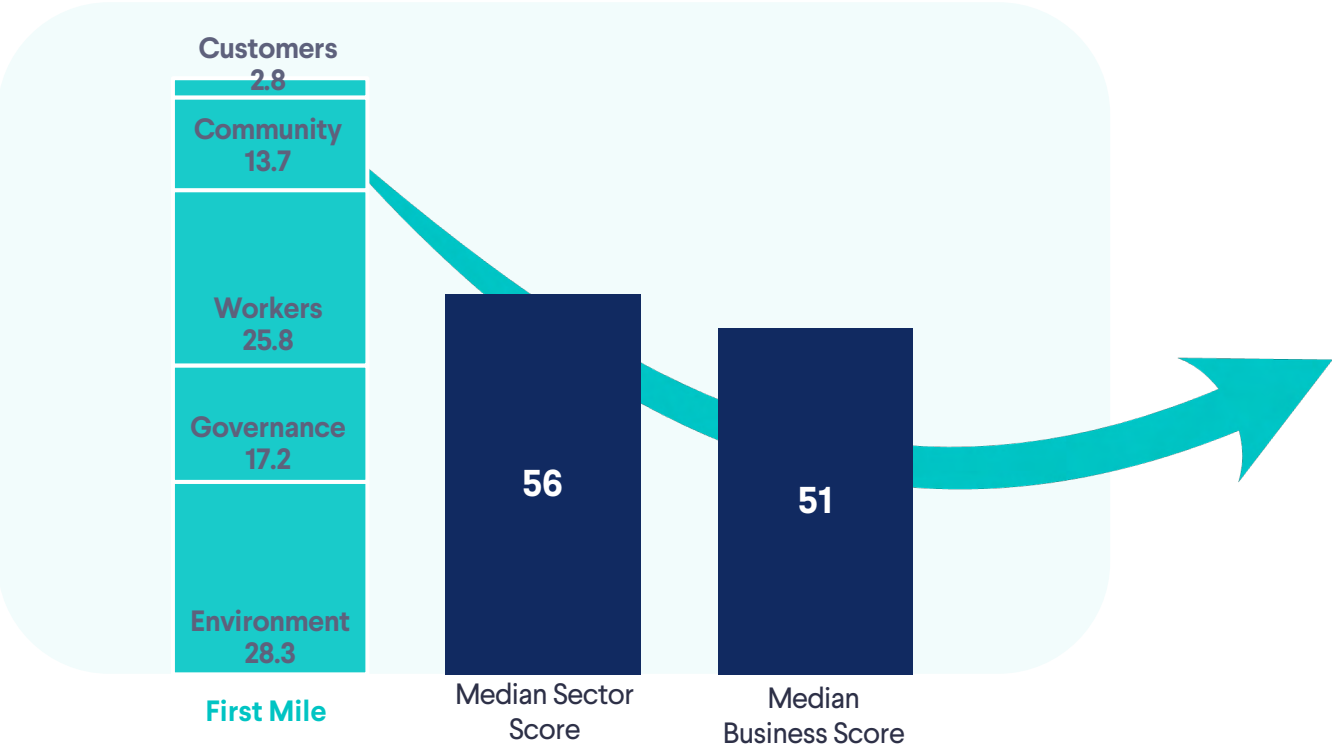
Corporation

+56%

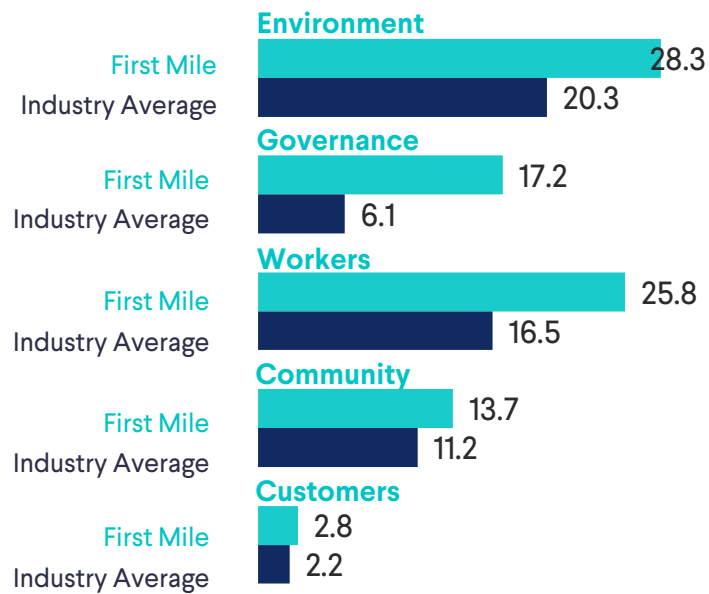
vs Sector Average

Our score

88



## B Impact Assessment Categories



## 02 Planet







# Environmental impact approach



## Better recycling

Thanks to superior customer engagement and better waste segregation than industry average, we can recycle more.



## Greener operations

We can collect waste more efficiently than peers and reduce local air pollution levels.



## Sustainable supply

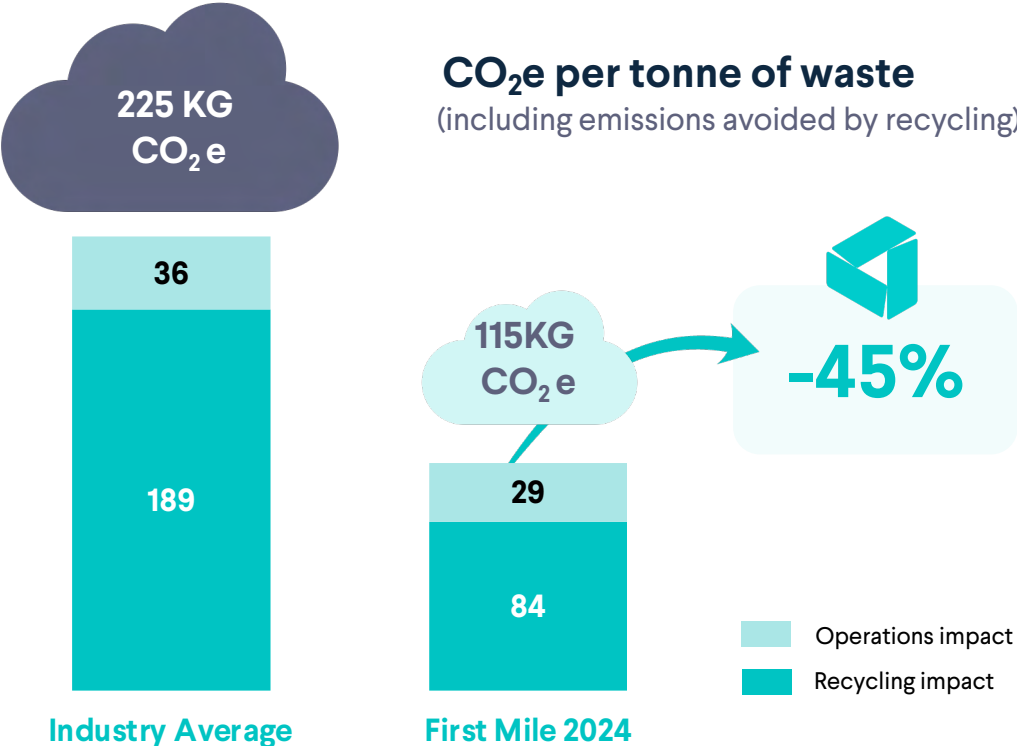
We work with partners who care about the environment and develop them to be lower impact.



### Environment

B Impact Assessment  
Relevant Impact Area

# Our carbon impact 2024



**45%** lower emissions per tonne of waste collected than industry average due to better recycling rates and more sustainable operations

Recycling avoids the land use for forestry, mining and processing that would have been required to produce from virgin materials.

Our **higher recycling rates** allows us to **reduce land use** by twice as much as the industry average.

## Biodiversity impact

Land use avoided (m<sup>2</sup>) per tonne of waste

Industry Impact

759m<sup>2</sup>

First Mile 2024

1739m<sup>2</sup>

**> 90%** of biodiversity loss and water stress is a result of extraction and processing of materials, fuels and food.

- Ellen MacArthur Foundation

2x land use avoided



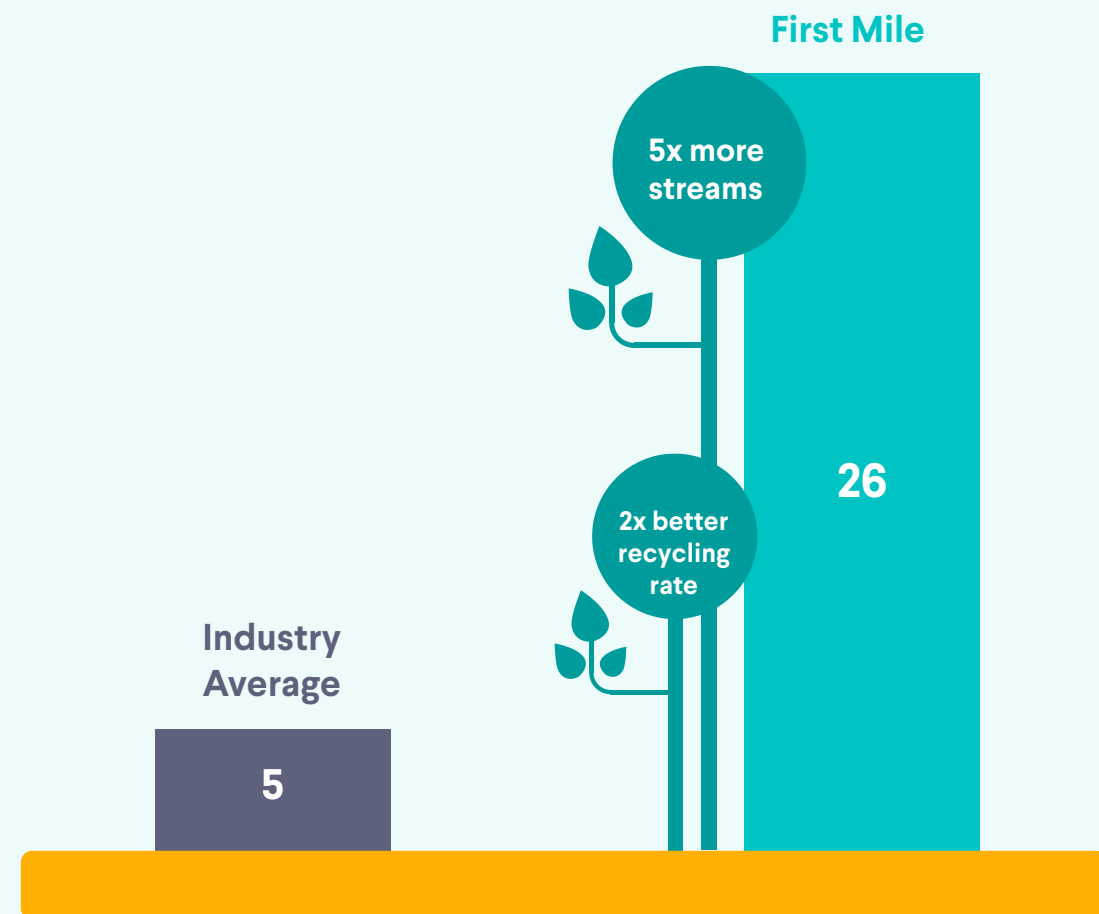
# Circular economy recycling

Our business model is inherently **good for the planet** - as our customer base grows, so does our positive environmental impact.

Greater scale improves operational efficiency, reducing emissions intensity and enabling short-distance clean transport (e.g., electric zero-emission cargo bikes).



## First Mile number of waste and recycling streams compared to the industry average



# Building a sustainable supply chain



## Our unique business model

We operate a bespoke waste sorting facility but do not process waste ourselves. This allows us the flexibility to partner with those who deliver the **greatest environmental benefit**.

## End-destination transparency

Customers can then track where their waste has been processed on our Customer Portal.



## Sustainable Products

Our sacks are produced from recycled agricultural film and the recycled plastics that we collect are sent back to the manufacturer.

Over 35

Specialist recycling partners nationwide





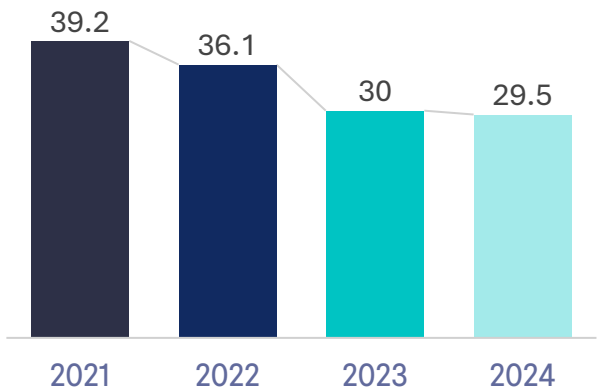
# Innovation

We are always innovating for ways reduce the environmental impact of our operations and to maximise recycling rates .

Our electric cargo bike collections doubled last year, and our driver app, Miley, has begun to optimise our routes to reduce road miles and improve customer experience.

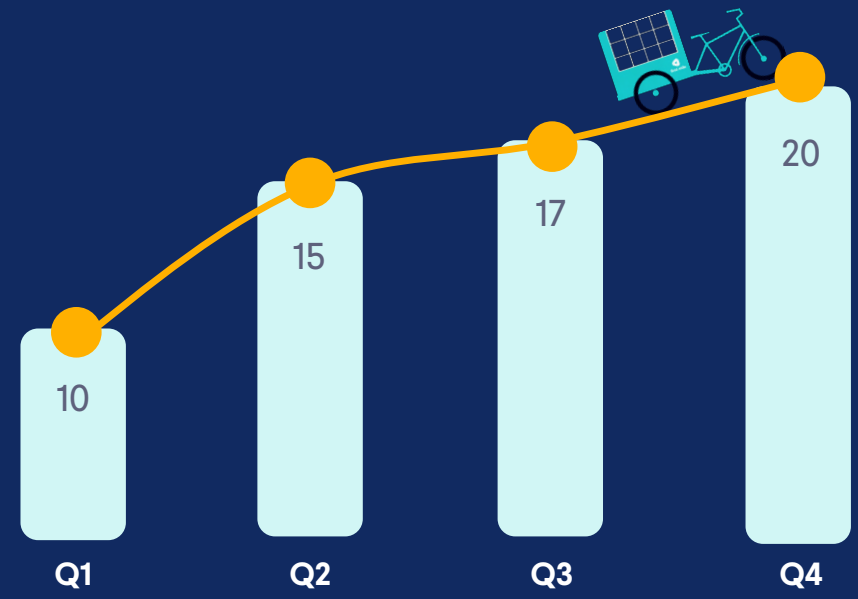
In 2024, our **CO<sub>2</sub>e per tonne collected decreased by 2%**. Our innovations above were partially offset by the expansion of our London operations and a growing customer base.

**Scope 1 & 2 emissions intensity**  
kg CO<sub>2</sub>e / tonne waste collected



Emissions (TCO <sub>2</sub> e)	1953	2714	2428	2478
Intensity (T CO <sub>2</sub> e / £m Sales)	79	68	53	49

## Our number of cargo bike collection rounds increased 100% in 2024



## We launched our custom built driver app, Miley, for better route optimisation

Our custom-built driver app is used to optimise our collection routes, reducing road miles and ensuring excellent service for our customers.

# Enabling multi-tenanted sites to track and report on waste like never before with RecycleID™

RecycleID™ is First Mile’s unique waste tracking solution and is part of our broader strategy to enhance urban sustainability and help our customers to reach their zero-emission and ESG targets.

It is designed for multi-tenanted offices, estates, retail centers, railway stations and airports, where a solution is needed to manage complex waste infrastructure.

Using the RecycleID™ app, weighing platform, and QR-coded sacks, customers can track every kilogram of waste by tenant or area.

This enables them to transform waste insights – tracking waste volumes and contamination back to individual tenants or areas, enabling a ‘pay as you throw’ chargeback based on actual usage. It supports landlords with straightforward, trackable waste management and provides tenants with specific data to meet their reporting requirements.

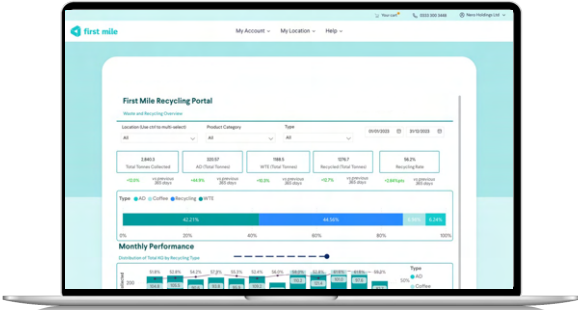
In 2024 we released several new features to improve the functionality of RecycleID™ and saw many more customers implement the solution across their sites with clients including Here East, 40 Leadenhall and Knight Frank leading the way.



# Supporting customers to self-serve for seamless online waste management and reporting insights

As well as optimising our RecycleID™ systems, we also upgraded our customer portal and recycling suite making it even easier for customers to manage their waste across sites, and access and download reports on their progress.

We rolled out new features including automating compliance checking ahead of changes to recycling rules in England under Simpler Recycling, API connections to third party ESG systems and more granular carbon and scope 1 and 2 emissions reporting.



# Driving innovation and collaboration across multi-tenanted spaces in partnership with JPC by Samsic

First Mile are proud partners of concierge cleaning experts JPC by Samsic, helping to transform waste management across their portfolio. We've worked together at the prestigious multi-tenanted site Chiswick Park since 2023, and last year became the new waste partner at technology park Here East.

Our collaboration in 2024 has driven increased engagement with tenants, improved recycling rates and delivered measurable environmental benefits.

## The Challenge

Both Here East and Chiswick Park are multi-use, multi-tenant sites generating a wide variety of waste—from tech firms and universities to retail outlets and corporate offices. Ensuring consistent recycling standards, monitoring performance by unit, and engaging diverse stakeholders required a robust, adaptable and data-led solution.



## Our Solution

Through our shared expertise of waste management and facility management we put together a strategy focused on three core areas; innovation, tailored waste solutions and tenant engagement. JPC by Samsic were enthusiastic supporters of implementing new technology.

By leveraging RecycleID™ weighing and tracking in each waste room and NANDO.ai bin sensors across each site, we gained real-time insights into waste volumes and contamination, enabling targeted education and performance improvements.

Based on the data on the types of materials produced we introduced 10 new recycling streams across each site, including coffee cup recycling (which were turned into recycled notepads as a closed-loop solution) and paper towels at Chiswick Park, plus green waste at Here East.



Tenants received bespoke waste audits and consultations to optimize recycling across each site, while ongoing engagement—through training, feedback sessions, and sustainability clubs hosted by JPC by Samsic—fostered a collaborative culture.

## Results in 2024

**Recycling Rates** - +10% year-on-year at Chiswick Park, while Here East saw a huge improvement from **20% to 69%**

**Carbon Reduction**- combined carbon saving of over 500 tonnes across both sites in 2024

**Pioneered the use of RecycleID™ bin tracking technology and Nando bin sensors** - reducing contamination rates by 15%.





# 03 People



# Our approach to improving social impact

Our customers and our teams are at the heart of everything we do, demonstrated by our two core values to **amaze customers** and **be one team** (the other one of course is **love the planet!**).

We approach how we design our services and solutions with a customer-centric mindset, and we're aligned around the four areas of the B Corp social impact areas.

Our account management team partner with clients to shape effective recycling strategies and support projects that boost recycling rates, whilst our customer experience teams are focused on delivering the best service and support for all our customers no matter size, sector or geography.

## B Impact assessment relevant Impact Areas

Governance

Workers

Community

Customers

Certified



Corporation

2/3

of customers have  
2 or more recycling  
streams

Working with

57

BIDS

★ Trustpilot



Rated Excellent

77%

Customer  
satisfaction score

8x

Front of house  
recycling rate  
improvement by  
using segregated bins  
and signage

8239

sign ups for new  
recycling streams

+1000

event and webinar  
attendees

# 2024 customer initiatives

## First Mile Recycling Standard

Each year we reward our customers with a certificate with a Recycling Standard to celebrate their recycling efforts for the previous year.

Depending on their recycling rate and the number and type of services they have with us, customers are awarded either Gold, Silver, or Zero to Landfill Recycling Standard.

## Simpler Recycling Preparation

Last year we also worked in collaboration with DEFRA to help our customers stay informed of the changing guidance around the new Simpler Recycling rules that came into effect for businesses in England earlier this year.

We helped businesses get ready with clear, practical support through webinars, leaflets, emails, and on-the-ground guidance.



## Food Heroes

Through our partnership with Too Good to Go, businesses are paired with dedicated Food Waste Heroes who collect surplus edible goods and redistribute them within local communities—helping reduce food waste and support those in need.



## Closing the Loop

First Mile customers can purchase products made from their own recycling, supporting a circular economy. Our closed-loop range includes:



- Closed-loop recycled copier paper
- Recycled coffee cup notebooks and stationery
- Refurbished consumer electronics
- Recycled plastic pellets for use in a variety of custom products
- Plastic beer keg refurbishment scheme for food and beverage
- Polybags for clothing made from recycled poly bags collected from your store
- Cardboard recycled into new products within 14 days of collection

## Engagement

First Mile connects with customers through workshops and events, sharing insights, answering questions, and working together to drive smarter, more sustainable waste solutions.





# Delivering strategic savings and increasing recycling rates with itsu

In July 2024, high street food retailer, itsu partnered with First Mile to streamline waste management across 45 stores in London and nationwide —delivering cost savings, boosting recycling rates, and ensuring a smooth, reliable switch from their previous provider.

From the start, we partnered with itsu to set clear KPIs focused on:

- **Cost efficiencies**
- **Improved recycling performance**
- **Collection reliability**

## The Challenge

As a nationwide chain, itsu needed a scalable solution to waste management that could be replicated in each store whilst finding cost efficiencies. itsu wanted to boost recycling rates but needed to be able to depend on reliable, flexible collections to ensure consistent delivery of excellent service to its customers so there could be no disruption when switching between providers.

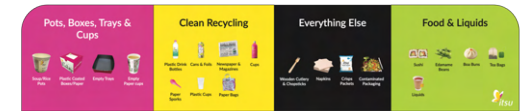
## Our solution

Our dedicated strategic account manager, Claire, put together a clear roadmap of initiatives focused on delivering a 26% cost saving and 65%+ recycling rate within our partnership term.

She then led a seamless mobilisation, reviewing all schedules at all sites to optimise and ensure correct frequencies of collections, and rolling out new services were required.

Every itsu site was set up on the First Mile customer portal from day one with the correct schedules and services, and able to self-serve to ensure easy management at each store.

We also tailored our educational resources and provided branded recycling signage, waste handbooks and portal guides at every store to ensure consistent and engaging training to boost recycling rates and reduce contamination.



We rolled out optimised schedules and improved back of house food recycling services to help itsu reduce operational complexity and ensure full compliance ahead of the changing Simpler Recycling reforms.

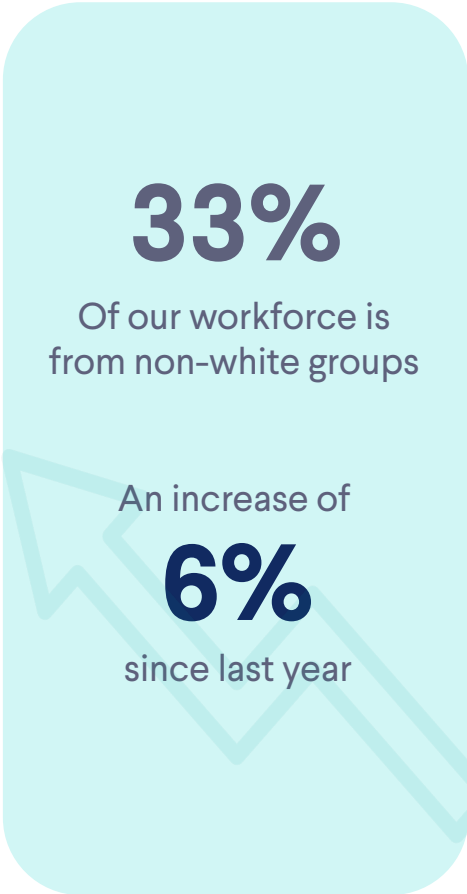
## Success within the first 10 months

- **15% cost savings** already achieved, on track to reach 25% by end of 2025.
- **An increase of recycling rates by +22pp**
- **Collection success rate of 99.96% from day one**, consistently maintained.



“We set clear targets and backed them up with action. The partnership with itsu is a great example of what can be achieved when sustainability, service and strategic planning align.”  
- Claire Buckland, Strategic Account Manager, First Mile

# Our people



# Awards



Best Overall People Experience  
Highly commended



Employee Training and Skills award



# Our people



## Pay & Benefits

We are a London Living Wage Employer – everyone at First Mile is paid at least £13.85 an hour.

## Employee Appraisals and Bonus

All employees are eligible for quarterly bonuses and receive an appraisal each quarter.

We have prizes for Driver, Cyclist, and Management First Miler of Quarter – announced at our First Mile Town Halls. [Halls](#).



## Wellbeing

### Nominated for: Employee Wellness Initiative of the Year

For our provision of Mintago for financial, physical, and mental wellbeing.

### Massage Therapy

We host monthly massage sessions with experienced masseuses for our drivers.



Anton Petrov,  
First Mile in-house trainer

## Training 765

Hours of CPC training completed by our HGV drivers last year.

Additional Safe Urban Driving training has been added for our Cyclists and Van Drivers.

Our own fire safety training.

Training is also provided to our management team. Last year, we offered sessions on Deaf Sign Language, Presentation Skills, and Giving Feedback.



First Mile electric cargo bikes were the **FIRST** in the country to get FORS Silver accredited



# Health and Safety: Fire Mitigation Training & Response Programme

Fire incidents in waste management are rising sharply due to improper disposal of lithium battery e-waste—especially disposable vapes—posing major risks to people, safety, and assets. First Mile faced several such incidents, including full compactor losses, and we decided it was important to improve processes in the industry to ensure the safety of our people and the wider community.

## The Challenge

- Frequent fires caused by lithium batteries hidden in general waste.
- Fleet-wide exposure, affecting compactors, cage trucks, and even cargo bikes.
- Lack of tailored, multilingual fire emergency protocols available in the industry,
- Need for rapid rollout of effective training across a diverse team of 210 staff members.

## Our Solution

In response, we launched a comprehensive Fire Mitigation and Emergency Response Programme in early 2024, built around four key pillars:

**External Expert Training** - We partnered with a Chartered Institution of Waste Management (CIWM)-certified trainer to deliver a full-day, on-site fire prevention and mitigation course.

**Development of Tailored Procedures** - Using insights from the training, we designed specific fire response protocols for every vehicle in our fleet.

**Multilingual Accessibility** - Recognising the diversity of our operational team, all training and response materials were delivered in four key languages.

**Fire Emergency Response Cards**- Every vehicle now has a fire response card, tailored by vehicle and language, with clear steps to safely discharge burning waste—avoiding extinguisher use on lithium fires.

‘First Mile have shown professionalism and innovation in taking a tailored approach to training their staff to deal with an all-too-common issue in the waste management industry. Others can learn from their considered approach.’

— Dan Cooke, Fire Prevention & Mitigation Trainer, CIWM

## Results

- **4 fires were successfully managed** across different environments;
  - **Zero third-party damage**
  - **No disruptions to the public**
  - **No injuries to the team**
  - **Vehicles preserved** due to correct protocol adherence
- **Pre-training benchmark:** Total loss of a truck in Birmingham due to a similar incident.
- **Post-training performance:** Fire risks neutralized without escalation or equipment loss.

## Conclusion

In an industry where fire prevention is increasingly difficult, First Mile’s commitment to fire management rather than prevention has set a new benchmark. Through structured, vehicle-specific, multilingual training and the integration of expert insights, First Mile has made its operations significantly safer, while maintaining continuity and protecting its people, assets, and the public.

# Community



## Camley Street Gardening

Last year we spent several days creating a vegetable garden near our Bike Depot in Camley Street.

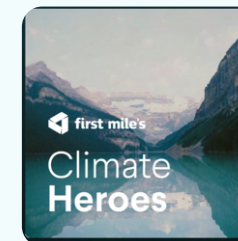
We planted and grew vegetables including peppers, tomatoes, and chilies which were then donated in the community.

## Community: Engagement

### Climate Heroes

The First Mile Climate Heroes Podcast shares the stories of businesses, activists and academics working to solve climate change.

Last year we featured episodes with: Caffe Nero, Too Good to Go, and Innocent Drinks.



### Litter Picking

Our staff regularly take part in litter picks, often in collaboration with customers and members of the local community.



## Charitable Giving

**Trussell Trust** - Last Christmas, we were proud to support the Trussell Trust by contributing to their food bank initiative, helping provide essential supplies to individuals and families in need during the festive season.

**Crisis** - Free recycling for Crisis centres & shelters at Christmas.

**Small steps** - Support for families on municipal dumps worldwide via Small Steps Project.



# Thank you

If you would like to learn more about our impact initiatives or the methodologies in our report, then feel free to contact us through our website:

[info@thefirstmile.co.uk](mailto:info@thefirstmile.co.uk)

