



Impact Report 2023



when
life
gives
you

seep
Eco
Copper
Scourers
Zero Plastic
Long Lasting

we scoured the world
and found the answer

seep
Gloves Grow on Trees

A look back at the year

When I look back at 2023, Seep isn't the same business as the one I described in my opening letter in last year's impact report.

2023 was a year full of external pressures on everyone. In particular, the cost-of-living crisis meant that many households had to tighten their belts and often more expensive, sustainable products were a luxury that many couldn't afford.

Despite this, Seep has weathered the storm and is a stronger business as a result. We've kept our impact and our customers front and centre of our business and haven't compromised on our values.

In fact, our mission of eliminating 1 billion plastic cleaning tools from landfill by 2030 has guided many of our decisions this year. From rebranding and creating new product formats to launching our new 100% plastic-free bamboo cloths, we've done everything with our mission in mind. We want to make a bigger impact and so we've prepared our business to scale in 2023 to reach even more people in 2024 and beyond.

As always, we wouldn't have made it through another year stronger than ever without our incredible team (past and present), growing community of end customers, stockists and supportive investors.

With love and suds,



Seep's Founder & CEO



Our mission

Eliminate 1 billion
plastic cleaning
tools from landfill
by 2030





🤔 What does this mean exactly?

Our mission means that we want people to switch away from using plastic alternatives to cleaning tools that don't have to go to landfill at all, by either composting or being easily and endlessly recycled. Inevitably, some of our products will end up in landfill since people sometimes don't have time or access to alternative waste facilities. As is the case, the products must not leach microplastics, must biodegrade to harmless components and not have the plastic upstream footprint certifications.

📍 Where are we now?

Since launching in late 2020, we have prevented nearly 3.5 million plastic cleaning tool items from going to landfill, of which we estimate 55% of our products have not reached landfill at all. We have a long way to go to reach our target of 1 billion by 2030 (996.5 million to be exact), but we're very proud of what we've achieved so far and continue to grow and increase our impact.

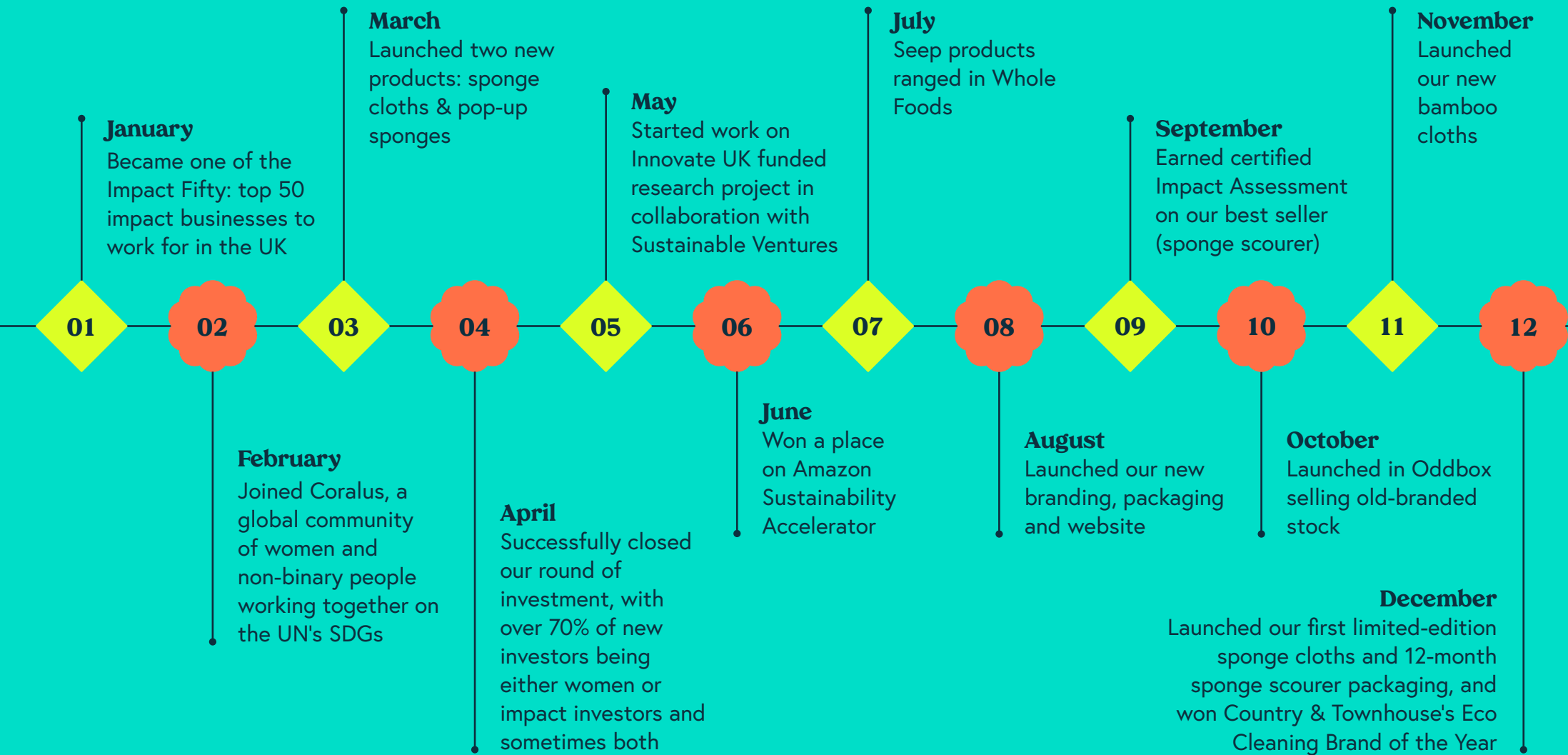
📏 How do we measure it?

We measure the individual number of products we sell each year, and where our products last longer, backed up by survey data or testing data, we calculate the number of plastic alternatives these have replaced. Based on customer survey data, we estimate that ~45% of our products currently end up in landfill. We'll keep measuring this over time as everyone (hopefully) gets access to alternative waste facilities and as we work hard providing better end-of-life advice and getting better certifications, so that people can compost or recycle with confidence.

🎯 How will we reach it?

Such a huge mission means that we have to disrupt the whole sector and focus our efforts on the biggest retailers of plastic cleaning tools, and (in time) on the largest global markets. This helps us prioritise and focus. Our impact won't just be measured in the number of products we replace, but also on the share of plastic-free products in the category globally.

2023 memorable moments





Easy on People

We want to change how people think, feel and act about cleaning their home and make sure that it's as easy as possible. Here's how we've been doing that in our third year and how Seep's customers, communities and colleagues have helped us along the way.



Our customers

Since launching, we wanted to build a business that our customers can be proud of and so it's our customers who drive a lot of our product decisions and community initiatives.

This year we've been listening a lot:

- ◆ **Loyalty programme**
We heard that customers wanted more ways to make their Seep purchases more affordable, so we launched a programme that gives money off for referrals, product reviews and engaging with us on social media.
- ◆ **Listening and surveys**
We create and improve our cleaning tools with our end users in mind so that they do the job just as well (if not better) than the traditional plastic versions. We did this as part of our Innovate UK grant and our annual customer survey this year.
- ◆ **Sustainability tips**
We share our eco tips, cleaning hacks, interesting environmental campaigns and content that our customer community tell us they're interested in.
- ◆ **Retailer community**
We've built a network of over 500 stores and wholesalers who share our ethos and represent Seep in local communities across the UK. We use their feedback to improve our cleaning tool offering. This year we created lower priced products, made smaller pack sizes so that independents could meet the minimum order and created more impactful packaging for their shelves.



Easy on People



Our communities

Our Supplier Community

We have continued to work with our largest suppliers to encourage them to raise their ethical and social standards even further. We're working with them to understand where their raw materials come from and, where possible, put in place Chain of Custody for certifications like FSC and PEFC.

Our Wider Community

We've met and started working with many other people whose ethics and missions align with ours in 2023. It's hard to build a truly sustainable brand from scratch, so we're grateful for the exchange of ideas and support. Every connection helps and the most notable this year have been:

- ◆ Amazing investor and founder communities supporting female-led businesses like Founder's Social, Buy Women Built, Female Founders Rise and Coralus
- ◆ The B Corp community where we find other amazing brands to collaborate with and thoughtful content and future plans that hold us accountable
- ◆ Charity partners, which includes our ongoing relationship with On A Mission who support carefully-vetted, community-run reforestation projects around the world. We've also supported local UK charities who help families in the face of the cost-of-living crisis, such as the Hygiene Bank and the Food Bank, by donating stock.



Easy on People



Our colleagues

Our team has changed over the past year.

We've welcomed Kirstie into our team after 20 years in fashion retail to head up our product development and supplier management. We also welcomed two interns to our team funded by The Mayor of London's Better Futures programme — Anna and Mina. We sadly said goodbye to a couple of the team too. We'd have loved for them to stay but, as a small business, we haven't always got the means to retain them.

We focused on what makes us unique as a team, creating a trusting and flexible place to work, where our team can grow and contribute in their own way to the mission. We've also introduced options to all of our employees, wellness days and specialist training to support their growth.

What's next?

- ◆ Supporting a new community partner in the UK called Foodcycle by providing them with cleaning products for their kitchens
- ◆ More flexible holidays
- ◆ Improving our listening, from customers and team members
- ◆ More engagement with key campaigns - Big Plastic Count, Better Business Act, B Corp, International Women's Day



FoodCycle has been nourishing communities with food and conversation for 15 years. Every week, in over 83 locations across England and Wales, thousands of volunteers serve nearly 3,000 healthy, delicious meals out of surplus food to anyone in different stages of life.



Easy on the Planet

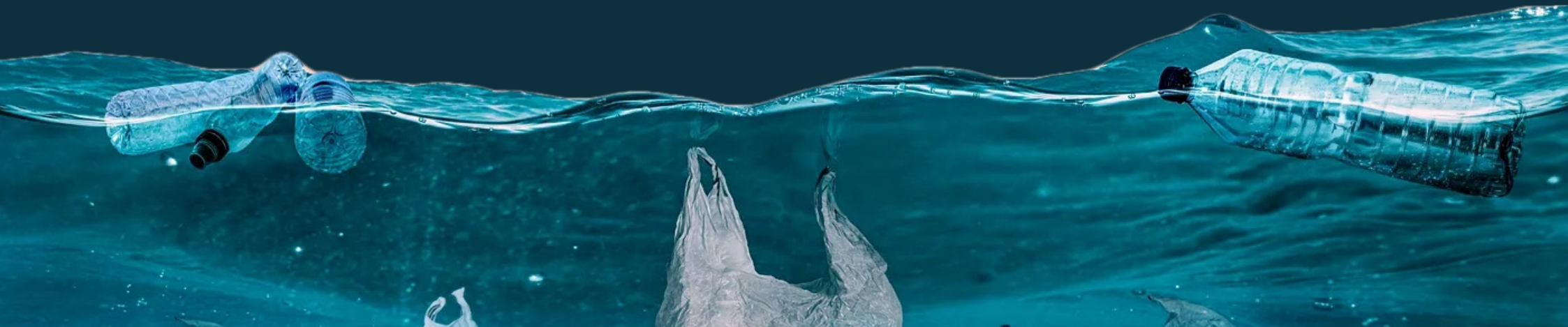
We asked our customers for their attitudes to sustainability and what matters most to them, and found that reducing plastic is at the top of their list. While we make sure that we're as sustainable as possible across everything we do, eliminating plastic is our number one focus.

Microplastics on the map

Moving away from plastic continues to gather momentum with amazing campaigns like Greenpeace's The Big Plastic Count in the UK and some (small) steps towards a new Global Plastic Treaty in 2023.

At Seep we're particularly interested in microplastics since the traditional plastic-based sponges and cloths release a lot of microplastics when they're used and washed. In 2023, real progress was made in microplastics research, showing their surprising reach and risks to human health. Microplastics were found in human lung tissue and blood for the first time, adding to growing evidence of their presence in our bodies. While plastic packaging is the obvious source of microplastics, research is starting to highlight other sources like polyester in clothing fibres. Their ubiquity is evident, with studies finding microplastics in remote areas like the Arctic.

Researchers are exploring exciting solutions like enzymatic breakdown of plastic and new alternative materials. Seep is engaging to some of these groundbreaking companies. While Seep clearly plays a key role in encouraging change, we're also hopeful that public awareness and stricter regulations shed a light on reducing microplastics too.





Easy on the Planet

Understanding and reducing our footprint

What steps did we take in 2023 to actually reduce our footprint?



FSC-certification Chain of Custody

We switched to FSC-certified packaging with a clear Chain of Custody in place. While we were already buying from FSC-certified sources, we can now prove ownership at each step and are audited so we can use the logo on our packaging.

100% plastic-free bamboo cloths

After over 2 years of testing fabrics and construction techniques, we finally launched our new 100% bamboo fibre cloths in November 2023.

Reduced packaging

Our best-selling 12-pack box of sponge scourers has moved from 3 printed boxes to a single, unbleached box with minimal print, reducing packaging by 20%.

Backing up our claims

We have certifications that all of the wood pulp, rubber and bamboo in our products are from certified sources (PEFC/FSC), even though we don't have Chain of Custody for all of them.

All-purpose sponge cloth

We introduced our new sponge cloth, which is 100% biodegradable, made from 70% cellulose and 30% waste cotton (cotton fibres that are too short for the textile industry). Once the cloth reaches the end of its life, it can be composted and will naturally breakdown.

Deepening our carbon footprint understanding

Through our participation in the Amazon Sustainability Accelerator, we completed an assessment of the carbon footprint of our best-selling product (sponge scourer).

End-of-life advice

We continue to encourage everyone to recycle and dispose of our products outside of landfill and upgraded our advice in our new packaging and website.



Easy on the Planet

Beyond carbon offsetting

People are wising up to greenwashing and one of the biggest culprits in recent years has been the practice of carbon offsetting.

Seep, along with many other businesses, used the terms "carbon negative" or "climate positive" on packaging, websites and billboards to signal that they were taking responsibility for their carbon footprint and offsetting it. It was a step forward in businesses measuring their footprint, but current thinking is that this practice can mask or hinder actual progress.

Businesses offset their footprint by funding reforestation projects that remove future emissions. Some carbon credit reforestation projects are questionable in terms of impact (mono variety forests with low biodiversity and high failure rates) and, rightly, these practices are being called out as being a bit lazy (at best) or misleading (at worst). We feel that reducing current carbon emissions in our business should be the priority, alongside continuing to support reforestation.

The EU passed regulations at the end of 2023 which will stop businesses from claiming carbon neutrality purely through offsetting and it has made us think about how we want to do it going forwards. In this report, for the first time, we break down the impact of using traditional products versus ours, and the level of reforestation we support.



Plastic footprint

2,267,659 CO2 kg



Seep footprint

1,781,002 CO2 kg



Total future reforestation supported

2,894,128 CO2 kg

What makes On A Mission different?

On A Mission partners with companies to help them understand their carbon footprint and reduce their emissions. With individuals and philanthropic donors, they team up to plant trees in high quality sustainable reforestation projects. All together, they strive to make a tangible impact on climate change, biodiversity and local communities.

By partnering with On A Mission, we're supporting environmental stewardship, climate impact, community development, as well as demonstrating a comprehensive commitment to sustainability that extends beyond our products.

531,019
trees planted
in 2023

1,700,000
trees planted
overall

8
worldwide
projects

What's next?

- ◆ Certifications — we want to show customers (retailers, end customers) that we can back up our claims with the right certifications. These are very expensive so we will prioritise those that matter most to our customers, e.g. compostability and vegan-friendly.
- ◆ Make sure that more of our products have full FSC Chain Of Custody
- ◆ Scope out and hopefully undertake primary research on microplastics from sponges
- ◆ Continue to provide transparency of our footprint vs. equivalent traditional products and the carbon impact of the reforestation projects we support
- ◆ Preparation for B Corp recertification





Easy on the Eye

The biggest change but also step forward this year was our rebrand, which we have now rolled out across all channels and packaging.

Why did we do it? We believe that the next wave of sustainable brands going mainstream are going to be "sustainable by default". These future brands will first and foremost be great products that are top notch in terms of performance and that look compelling on the shelf and online. They then just happen to be genuinely sustainable too. A great product should feel like something joyful to choose and use, and not just a worthy choice.

We developed our new logo, brand colours, graphics and packaging with input from our community and the brilliant folk at FLY creative agency. It has hit our brief of being fresh and a genuine change for good in the category, which is essential to achieving our mission. Our beloved lemons feature heavily in the design, as they are (in our opinion) the original sustainable cleaning ingredient.

We love the result and hope everyone else does too!



Feel Good Cleaning at Seep

Well, that's the end to another fantastic year of Seep!

We're so grateful to our community for supporting the rebrand, giving us feedback on our products and pushing us to keep doing something good for the world in a forgotten category.

The year ahead, we'll be focusing on winning in some mainstream places where we sit alongside the traditional products. Can we win at the shelf which is where the scale really is?

If there's anything in this report you'd like to ask us more about, please get in touch at hello@theseepcompany.com

If you want to hear more about what we're up to as it happens, sign up for our newsletter — it's straight talking but not strait-laced. We can't take ourselves too seriously after all, we're just trying to make you feel good when you're cleaning.



