

Impact report
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Mr & Mrs Smith

› Impact Report

Smith



Words by
Smith Editorial

The travel club for hotel lovers



In what has been another extraordinary year for Mr & Mrs Smith, the undoubted highlight for me is obtaining our B Corp certification in August. Achieving this represents confirmation that we have become what I have always wished we would: a genuine force for good in this industry. It doesn't end with this, of course; B Corp status is an important recognition of everything we are now, but the process of obtaining certification has also provided insight into exactly what we could be – and that's hugely exciting.

Our biggest focus this year has been on refining the business to be better for our team – a culture and virtual environment that sincerely and meaningfully supports welfare, wellbeing, diversity and inclusion. I am particularly proud of the work we've done here, such as the organic formation of internal groups: our LGBTQ+ community, which has brought us an important partnership with the Human Dignity Trust, and the newly formed ABLE group.

I'm also proud of the progress on diversity we have achieved in all departments. We will continue on this path in the year ahead, working to ensure we have more balanced teams across the business.

In 2022, we added more hotels to our collection than we have ever managed in a single year before. Our curation standards are not only as stringent as ever, but incorporate new thoughtful elements – for instance, actively seeking out and celebrating hotels that are engaged with their local communities. This year, we are adding another curation criterion: getting the basics right when it comes to sustainability. This will ensure that all newcomers to the Smith collection adhere to a baseline we can be proud of and build from.

Over the last two decades, our company has had an enormous impact on the UK travel landscape, and we hope to continue to do so for many more. This report is intended to help ensure that our impact remains positive, by sharing our commitments and our successes, detailing our plans for the future, and identifying the areas where we have scope to improve.

I can't wait to see where 2023 takes us.

Tamara Lohan

04 Travel & Sustainability in 2023

The tourism industry is responsible for an estimated 8–11% of global carbon emissions and is predicted to double by 2050 if there isn't a cultural change from traditional growth-orientated mindsets.



In 2023, our goal is to clearly and accurately define not only what our sustainability targets are, but to map out an ambitious practical pathway to achieving carbon neutrality.

Even more than in many other industries, those who work in travel have a profound responsibility to seriously understand and meaningfully champion sustainability. ‘Greenwashing’ in this sector is both rife and easy to spot – and we are determined to avoid it.

The tourism industry is responsible for an estimated 8–11% of global carbon emissions and is predicted to double by 2050 if there isn’t a cultural change from traditional growth-orientated mindsets. We have a responsibility to shift habits and create a more sustainable, responsible and climate-positive ecosystem. We will do this by defining reduction targets, working on removing more emissions than we produce, and continuing to educate our partners and members.

In 2023, our goal is to clearly and accurately define not only what our sustainability targets are, but to map out an ambitious practical pathway to achieving carbon neutrality. We will be working with experts to ensure we have the tools to accurately and comprehensively measure our emissions, and a full understanding of precisely what mechanisms and timeframe are best to enable us to reach net-zero – and, if possible, go beyond.

We will continue to champion and highlight the trailblazing properties around the world that are truly engaged in sustainability and conservation initiatives – as well as those that play an active role in supporting and sustaining the communities that surround them.

We have a lot of work to do in shaping our collective future in travel. We will always continue to challenge ourselves, set new targets and develop our purpose in sustainable tourism. We’re committed to protecting and restoring our natural ecosystems alongside our conservation partners, and will continue to honestly share our progress and practices.



08 Mission, Vision, Purpose

In 2022, we defined and declared the Mission, Vision and Purpose of Mr & Mrs Smith. *Our Mission* describes the foundation of our work, what we do, and how we do it.. *Our Vision* describes the ultimate goal of our business. *Our Purpose* describes the reason for our continuing existence.



Our Mission:

Empowering conscious travel choices by curating the world's most desirable hotel collection. Winning loyalty with unrivalled service and a genuinely rewarding member experience.

Our Vision:

Be the only place to book for the discerning hotel lover.

Our Purpose:

Shaping the future of staying together.



2022 highlights



Over the course of 2022, we embarked on a conscious critical effort to understand and improve our impact on every group that our business touches, including our members, our team, our hotelier community, and the world as a whole.

This resulted in a number of milestones – some big, some small, but all worth celebrating.

After a comprehensive audit of every aspect of the business, we were awarded B Corp certification in August. Mr & Mrs Smith is now officially recognised as a force for good.

We achieved our goal of becoming Living Wage-accredited, which means that we are recognised as paying everyone enough to live on in what we all know are challenging economic times.

We established internal community groups focused on LGBTQ+ and disability, both of which have been invaluable in raising awareness and understanding across the business.

Following conversations within our LGBTQ+ group, we have partnered with the Human Dignity Trust, which provides legal support to activists in countries where people are legally persecuted for their sexual orientation and/or gender identity. We are making contributions to the charity each quarter.

We broadened the company-wide holiday calendar to include Jewish and Hindu religious holidays, and we are incorporating Muslim holidays in 2023.

Underlining our outcomes-focused ethos and flexibility-driven approach to working, we have evolved our employee policies such that, if you require multiple appointments for ongoing health or social needs, these no longer need to be taken as holiday.

We instituted an ongoing diversity audit across all teams, and have used the data to set key targets for 2023 and beyond.

Our People

At Mr & Mrs Smith, we understand that our performance is ultimately rooted in the welfare and contentment of the people in it. Although we are a distributed team, we work hard to ensure that everyone feels part of the business and understands the impact that they, as individuals, have on our success and our ability to be a force for good.

In the last few years, we have redoubled our efforts to make Mr & Mrs Smith as inclusive and supportive as it can possibly be, for everyone in the business. We have maintained a focus on listening to and understanding our teams, educating ourselves, and responding to our learnings actively and with relevance. Recent measures have included the establishment of internal communities, beginning with LGBTQ+ and ABLE, which focuses on disability and neurodiversity. These groups share concerns and perspectives, suggest company policy, and widen education at all levels of the business.





Diversity and inclusion goals – how are we doing?

We declared an aim to increase the visibility of LGBTQ+ representation in our hotelier community, employees, future employees and reviewers through our website content

Achieved

- 1) We improved gender balance in three departments – Tech, Partnerships and Marketing
- 2) We have improved management support for our younger employees, as demonstrated by the increase in our Peakon engagement scores to 8+ for 18–24-year-olds.
- 3) We have ensured the parents and carers on our team feel supported by normalising the pressures of caring and work, maintaining a Peakon engagement score of 8.4 among this group.
- 4) We have met our target of offering at least one permanent role to someone from an underprivileged background.

Not achieved

- 1) We declared an aim to increase the visibility of LGBTQ+ representation in our hotelier community, employees, future employees and reviewers through our website content but, although we have made some progress in this area, we have not yet delivered the desired outcome. This therefore remains a target for 2023.
- 2) In 2022, we set goals to drive conversions to green energy use and reduce usage of gas, water and electricity among our team. In light of the severity of the ensuing energy and cost of living crises, we opted not to pursue this goal for the time being but understanding what we can do is a priority for 2023.

Company goals, — What will we do?

Over the coming year, we plan to build on our successes and insights of the last twelve months, address those areas where we could do better, and introduce new initiatives that make Smith a more rewarding, welcoming and progressive place to work.



We will expand our programme of diversity education and open discussion, with the support of Kiltered consultant Morag Offili, and with a particular focus on language and communication.

1) We will continue to try and achieve gender equity within Mr & Mrs Smith, focusing on the departments of Tech, Partnerships and Marketing, correcting existing imbalances by at least one person in each where we can.

2) We will increase the visibility of LGBTQ+ representation in our hotelier group, team and partners both externally and internally.

3) We will continue to ensure Mr & Mrs Smith is supporting parents and carers, maintaining a Peakon engagement score of 8.5+ among this group.

4) We will continue to provide opportunities for those coming out of education into the workforce, offering summer placements for secondary-school students from low income backgrounds and ensuring all interns are paid the living wage.

5) We will intensify our focus on team welfare, implementing a third-party wellbeing support channel for the business, chosen by team-wide vote, and operating a programme of financial wellbeing sessions with strategist and mentor Melanie Euseube.

6) We will continue to be relevant and pioneering in the next stage of remote working, outlining new ways of building culture and getting together in person.

7) We will expand our programme of diversity education and open discussion, with the support of Kiltered consultant Morag Offili, and with a particular focus on language and communication.

8) We will continue to nurture a culture of continuous learning and development, through our existing coaching resource from Human4, alongside monthly external workshops and initiatives with third-party organisations and resources such as the School of Life.



Embracing agility

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Over the course of 2022, we embarked on a conscious critical effort to understand and improve our impact on every group that our business touches, including our members, our team, our hotelier community, and the world as a whole.

In 2020, we made the decision to adopt agile practices across every department in the business. We believed that an agile approach would facilitate our transition to a fully distributed workforce, helping to maintain productivity, improve interdepartmental communication and collaboration and align departments across the business. Our belief was that agile approaches would enable us to build nimble, driven and courageous teams.

Today, the agile mindset is the foundation of our business. Working with consultancy Agility IM, we began implementing agile methodology with our Tech and Product teams, expanded to Curation and, more recently, to S24, Marketing and Editorial.

Our experience of implementing agile practices has been unambiguously positive. It has empowered our

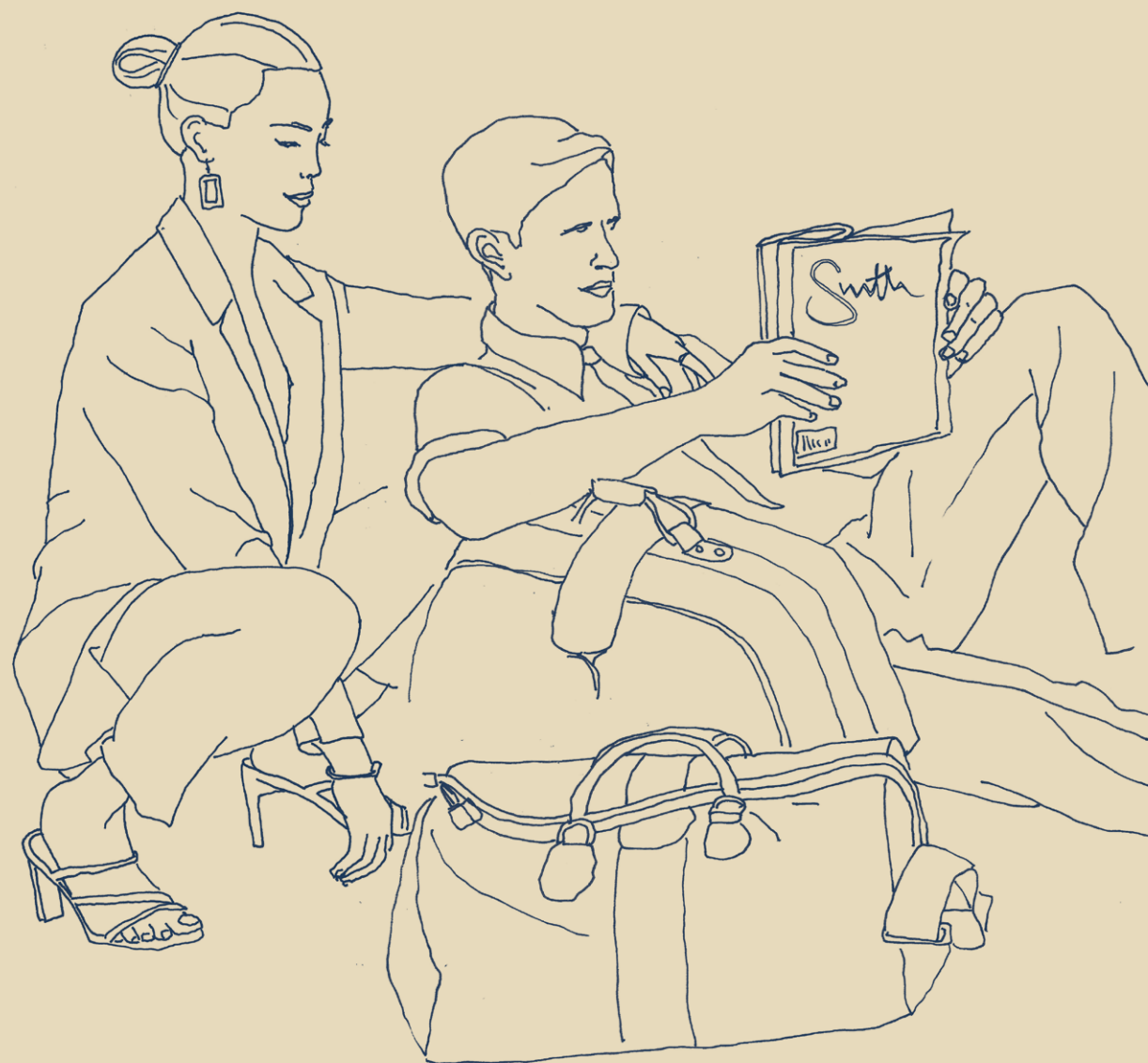
teams to communicate and collaborate effectively, lose the fear of failure, and understand how best to reach their goals in an effective and innovative way.

Our aim was to have 50% of the business employing agile practices (or at least having formal agility training) by the end of 2023. In fact, agility has been embraced so effectively throughout Mr & Mrs Smith that we will have more than achieved this, and every department is on track to be fully agile by Q4 2023.

We will therefore continue this approach, further cementing the principles of the agile mindset to make us a truly efficient and innovative operation.



Our Members



Since Mr & Mrs Smith was first founded, we have put our members' needs, interests and behaviours at the forefront of our business. Our dedication to offering travellers hotels and experiences tailored to their real-world habits and desires underpins every decision we make.

In 2022, responding to our members' growing concerns about environmentally sensitive travel, we remodelled our sustainability hub, undertaking an extensive audit of our hotels' eco credentials, so that we could ensure our members had the information they needed to make informed, responsible choices.

We made sure to highlight and celebrate those hotels that go above and beyond the expected in terms of sustainability and conservation, as well as those that go out of their way to engage with and support their local communities. This work will continue in 2023, as we intensify our efforts to unearth the fascinating stories behind the good work that so many of our hotels do, and share them with our members.

An additional focus in 2023 is healing and wellbeing. We know that more and more members are seeking places and experiences where they can achieve a 'reset', reconnecting with themselves, with loved ones and with nature. Today, more and more of us need a chance to step away from the daily grind and reboot – we will be helping our members do just that with a relaunched spa collection, a new wellbeing hub, and the introduction of a new collection of retreat stays that allow and enable guests to be the best of themselves, in a quiet way.

And, of course, we will continue to listen to our members and deserve the trust they place in us, by guiding them, thoughtfully and responsibly, to the hotels that we know will inspire and delight them, time after time.

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Our 26 charity partners

At Mr & Mrs Smith, we recognise the duty of care we owe to our planet, both as a travel business and as individual inhabitants. We're therefore proud to continue our support for two pioneering initiatives that work to protect and preserve the biodiversity of land and sea.

We also understand that not all travellers are afforded the same welcome everywhere, and that there are still many societies where discrimination is active and systemic. That's why we're also proud to have extended our charity support to include campaigning human-rights organisation the Human Dignity Trust.



Protecting the ocean

The Blue Marine Foundation is an NGO with a simple goal: to secure protected status for a minimum of 30% of the world's oceans by 2030.

Global marine life faces numerous threats, ranging from overfishing and CO2 contamination to global warming. Given that 80% of the world's oxygen comes from phytoplankton and underwater plants, our seas are essential for life on earth.

To date, the BMF has established two of the world's largest marine reserves in the Indian and Pacific, as well as the largest fully protected marine reserve in the Atlantic.

"As we move into our next year of partnership in 2023 with long-standing supporters Mr & Mrs Smith, we can look ahead with further optimism, now UN member states have agreed on a UN Ocean Treaty to protect ocean and marine life in areas beyond national jurisdiction. A beacon of hope has been shone upon our ocean's future. Blue Marine looks forward to collaborating with the team at Mr & Mrs Smith over the course of the year to ensure the momentum is carried forward and that we keep edging closer to restoring the ocean to health."

– Sara-Jane Skinner, Head of Partnerships, Blue Marine Foundation

In 2022, we donated £16,000 to the Blue Marine Foundation, and aim to further increase our donations in 2023.

Protecting the land

The World Land Trust exists to secure environmental protection for ecosystems all over the world, preserving biodiversity and preventing deforestation.

With only 15% of the Earth's land currently protected and half of the world's rainforests lost to deforestation in just 40 years, the Trust plays a crucial role in stopping habit loss through initiatives such as Buy An Acre, whereby a £100 donation can secure lifelong protection for an acre of land. Since 1989, the World Land Trust has protected more than 881,000 acres and funded 82 reserves in 20 countries.

In 2022, we donated enough to the World Land Trust to secure protection for 160 acres – and hope to donate more in 2023.

Donations

Donations to the Blue Marine Foundation and the World Land Trust are funded through a combination of carbon-offset costs for team travel and reviewer/content creator trips, gift card sales (£5 for every e-gift card; £1 for regular gift cards), and direct member donations made on booking.

Protecting human rights

For over a decade, the Human Dignity Trust has defended the rights of LGBT people around the world, working to legally challenge discriminatory laws in jurisdictions that persecute or criminalise people for their sexuality or gender identity – including several territories beloved by Smith travellers. Since 2011, the Trust has helped win 14 court victories in all regions of the world, decriminalising LGBT people and ensuring their right to freely form organisations. Its work in collaboration with the international legal community has opened up £20 million worth of pro bono legal services to LGBT activists globally.

Stemming from a recommendation made in our newly established LGBTQ+ community group, we have chosen to support the Human Dignity Trust by donating 0.25% of bookings at hotels in discriminatory countries.

'We are thrilled to partner with such a high quality brand as Mr & Mrs Smith, whose donations will help us carry on with our work to help LGBT people free themselves from discriminatory laws globally.'

– Téa Braun, Chief Executive, Human Dignity Trust

Since our partnership began in Q4 2022, we have donated £1,650 to the Trust.



Our Hotels





It is not only our own actions and policies as a business that have the power to have a positive impact on the world, but also those of the hotels we represent. As well as extraordinary experiences, exceptional design and above-and-beyond service, we ensure that every hotel we admit into our collection is aligned with our mission to be a force for good.

Sustainability and social value are now integral elements of our curation policy. In 2022 we adopted four curation criteria rooted in environmental ethics – Community spirited, Innovative, Inspiring and Down-to-earth. For 2023, we are introducing a fifth: Getting the basics right.

This means that Smith members can be confident that any new hotel joining the collection will meet baseline sustainability standards – while also helping us effectively elevate and champion those properties that go even further to promote regenerative hospitality. We are working on the creation of a sustainability deck to detail these baseline eco standards and best practices, which will be shared with our partner hotels, which they can use as a resource to inform and inspire their own policies and practices.

Our curation standards

To help determine whether a given property is right for the Smith collection, the Hotel Curation team asks:

‘Is this hotel...’

1) Getting the basics right?

Does this hotel have the simple stuff covered? Is the restaurant sourcing locally, ethically and seasonally? Are they making use of waste water? Recycling properly? Minimising plastic use? Linen reuse programme?

2) Community-spirited?

Does this hotel give something back? Does it employ local staff and support local projects? Is it involved in local conservation programmes? In what ways does it demonstrate ethical awareness? How does it serve or support the larger regional community?

3) Innovative?

Are they a trailblazer in the eco-hotel sphere? Do the hotel buildings go beyond low-impact to lead the way architecturally? Is there a pioneering use of new technology or a showcase for traditional methods?

4) Inspiring?

Can guests watch turtles hatch, or rare sharks swim over a protected house reef? Can they marvel at a pristine landscape without the sense that they are also polluting it? Are there opportunities to meet people who have benefited from community projects?

5) Down-to-earth?

Is the hotel eco-friendly without taking the moral high ground? Does it inform and educate its guests without lecturing them? Are they transparent, open and honest about what they’re doing – and what they could do better?

Collection-wide updates

The Smith collection is lucky to contain many truly trailblazing hotels who go to extraordinary lengths to be sustainable and make a meaningful difference to their local communities. As a travel business, we are privileged to be able to spotlight these properties and share their stories with our members.





They include:

Pa.te.os in Portugal, which planted indigenous trees to offset carbon emissions during its construction, is using wastewater to create a new lake, and sourced its beach bags and towels from a Bangladeshi women's craft collective.

Craveiral Farmhouse in Portugal, an exemplar for the circular economy in which nothing is wasted and almost everything is generated on site – down to having its own water-treatment station in the grounds. They have even been able to reintroduce several local plant species that were believed lost.

Lux Le Morne in Mauritius operates a JunkArt Studio, where adults and children alike are invited to upcycle trash, transforming it into artworks, craft items and functional everyday objects.

Villa Lena in Tuscany is a renewable-run, non-profit artists' hideaway and biodynamic farm that not only produces its own wine and olive oil, it also provides support for local artists (more than 400 to date) and hospitality training for the local community.

Cannùà in Colombia has eco-consciousness embedded in its very bricks – 100,000+ of which were made from compressed earth taken from the soil on which it stands. Dedicated to reforestation, the resort has thus far restored nine hectares, bringing back a number of endangered species after years of exile.

Salt of Palmar in Mauritius is passionately involved in a number of island social programmes – including its skill swap platform, which encourages guests to enjoy meaningful exchanges with locals while learning new skills, teaching their own, or both.

Hotel Hotel in Lisbon is deeply invested in the local artists' community, and actively supports up-and-coming talents. In addition, its expansive programme of wellness classes has turned it into a community wellbeing hub.

Isla Palenque, a private island off Panama, is set in 400 acres of rainforest and has eco best practice running through every sustainable-hardwood plank. There's an effective reforestation programme for guests to get involved with, and the hotel educates local farmers in sustainable agriculture, too.

Octola Private Wilderness in Finland has the distinction of being carbon-negative. Electricity is wind generated, heating is geothermal, and all water is filtered straight from the property's own natural spring.

Editorial and comms programme

In 2023, we will continue to use our editorial platforms – including our website, member emails and social media – to inspire and educate our members about sustainable hotels and travel experiences.

To minimise our own impact, we have made a commitment to commission freelance writers and photographers who are already based in the destinations we are covering, wherever possible.

Our calendar of forthcoming content includes a number of features rooted in sustainability and society, including:

A visit to the World Land Trust's protected woodland, Kites Hill

A round-up of the women leading the way in sustainability in travel to mark IWD

An interview with the founder of the Human Dignity Trust

An Instagram Live Q&A with the Blue Marine Foundation

At mrandmrssmith.com, our sustainability hub is home to our eco-friendly collection, CEO pledge, curation criteria, and links to our conservation partners. Elsewhere on the site is a new wellness category on our editorial platform – home to features and resources focusing on health and wellbeing. In May 2023, we will be supplementing this with a new wellness and spa hub.

Hoteliers now complete an extensive sustainability questionnaire when their properties join the collection. These details are featured in the expanded sustainability section on hotel pages and help us keep our eco-friendly collection up to date. This means that Mr & Mrs Smith is in a unique position to be able to track the most innovative sustainability initiatives and best-practice guidance from hotels across the globe and then share those findings among our international hotel community via our hotelier newsletters.

What next?

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Our next major step is taking the time and making the effort to truly understand what we need to do to achieve net-zero. 2023 will see us focus intently on emissions measurement across the business, gathering hard, meaningful data on which to build our road-map to carbon neutrality.

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In our company impact report in 2022, we made a commitment to keep you updated on the progress we made as we strived to be a force for good in the travel sector. This year's report is our first attempt to do precisely that.

Although we have achieved most of the things that we set out to do last year (acquiring B Corp certification being the most notable), there are still areas we need to focus on and new goals we need to achieve. This, of course, is the nature of being a permanent work-in-progress: never achieving perfection – that would be impossible – but always striving to get closer to it, to be that force for good.

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In all areas, we have set ourselves on a course of continuous incremental improvement. By listening to our team, to our members, and to voices from across the wider travel world, we aim to broaden our understanding, educate ourselves and our communities, and, ultimately, to make a positive difference. Watch this space.

Mr & Mrs Smith

Thank you

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