



SUSTAINABLE FASHION WEEK 2022 IMPACT REPORT



Our second year...

As 2022 drew to a close, we took a moment to reflect on the growth of our activities over the course of the last year and the impact this has had on the community. We are so pleased at what we've been able to achieve with such little resource. All activities are still primarily led by volunteer hours, using sponsorship to cover our core costs. Fuelled by a real dedication to making a difference and driving change - our small team has significantly increased its reach this year.

Following the launch of Sustainable Fashion Week (SFW) in 2021, we delivered a programme of community engagement events and collaborations across 2022. We loved the diversity of these - working with such a variety of organisations and individuals to approach different audiences from different angles, and helping to generate community-to-community action in favour of more sustainable fashion habits.

In this report, we've reviewed our work in the last year and given space for our partners and participants to feed back on what impact working with us has had. We've then taken a moment to look forward at what 2023 will look like for both A Single Thread CIC (the company behind SFW) and our annual flagship event.

Amelia Twine, SFW Founder

MISSION STATEMENT

Working with the community, we help make sustainable fashion accessible. Taking a creative, grassroots approach, we empower people with skills and resources to help drive a positive shift in our collective relationship with clothes.

KEY 2022 SUCCESSES:

- Increasing our online and in person engagement to 59,977 over the year
- Winning in the 'Sustainability' category at the Bristol Life Awards
- Seeing our community events programme gain international participants
- Increasing the programme's geographical reach in the UK from 7 to 25 regions
- Working with such a variety of partners, including community groups, brands, businesses, local authorities and creative spaces





A SINGLE THREAD CIC

A Single Thread CIC is the community interest company behind all Sustainable Fashion Week (SFW) activity. All our work is non-profit, engaging with a variety of audiences to inspire and activate people in the community in favour of more sustainable relationships with clothing.

A SINGLE THREAD

Throughout the year, we seek out interesting partnerships to explore unique and creative ways to engage with people.

OUR VISION



We're reimagining our collective relationship with clothing. Envisioning a fashion industry that is joyful whilst also being regenerative, harm-free and having only a positive impact on people and planet.

OUR MISSION



We want to support a bold shift away from fast fashion; resourcing and inspiring people in different communities to join a growing movement for change and find individual ways of engaging with sustainability.

OUR GOAL



An informed, passionate and empowered SFW Community, taking collective action across the UK and beyond to have a harm-free relationship with clothing.

A Sustainable Fashion Industry

Referring to fashion as 'sustainable' can prove problematic as the definition can be so broad, and has been too often hijacked by the marketing teams for fast fashion brands. Our vision of a sustainable fashion industry is one that:

DOES NO
HARM

is built on a
CULTURE OF
EXCHANGE

is fuelled by
COLLECTIVE
ACTION



SFW CALLS TO ACTION

Our core sustainability themes underpin all our activity – with four calls to action giving our audience different entry points to sustainability in fashion. We want to ensure consumers feel empowered to make sustainable choices in their fashion habits, without requiring a big budget. The narrative needs to emphasise accessibility for all.

#REGENERATE

- DO choose organic, regenerative or recycled fibres, if buying new
- DO centre garment workers' rights and wellbeing when you choose where to shop
- DO reject fast fashion – holding brands to account and demanding an end to fashion's exploitation of people and planet
- DO wash and care for clothing in a way that reduces its environmental impact

#REPURPOSE

- DO repair clothing, keeping it in use for longer
- DO keep textile waste out of landfill by finding new uses for it
- DO create new clothing with pre-loved textiles

#RECONNECT

- DO become an activist take action for change
- DO reconnect with your community to share skills and knowledge
- DO take a stand and be represented. Sustainable fashion must include and be accessible to people from all communities
- DO reconnect with the impact of overconsumption and join this movement for change
- DO reconnect with the process of how your clothing is made

#REWEAR

- DO invest in preloved clothing to avoid buying new
- DO host clothing swaps and share clothing with your network
- DO explore local rental schemes to avoid buying new
- DO feel pride in wearing outfits again and again (and again!)

AND WHY?

The overproduction and overconsumption of fashion is fuelling the climate crisis.

It destroys habitats, speeds up biodiversity loss, poisons soil and waterways, contributes to deforestation of ancient woodland and adds to water stress. Workers in the supply chain are harassed, underpaid, exploited and working in unsafe conditions. And at the end of a garment's useful life it contributes to mountains of textile waste in landfills – both in the UK and exported to the Global South. Plastic microfibres are found in our seas, air and soil – working their way into our bodies and the food chain.

Fashion accounts for up to 10% of global carbon emissions

Over 60% of new clothing produced is made from plastic

14m tonnes of microplastics are estimated to be in our oceans

Less than 1% of textiles fibres are recycled into new clothing

Fashion consumption is projected to increase by 63% by 2030



2022 ACTIVITY

Throughout 2022 we've partnered with a wide range of organisations to deliver a varied and impactful programme of activity. We've worked at different levels to reach a variety of audiences with informative, creative and hands-on engagement.



STITCH & SWITCH EVENTS

Our 'Stitch & Switch' events took a free-to-participate clothes swap and repairs service to community centres across Bristol, with a focus on areas of greater deprivation. We hosted five of these events across 2022, extending our April event with talks from local industry experts to coincide with Fashion Revolution Week.



BRISTOL MUSEUMS COMMISSION

We were thrilled to work with Bristol Museums for their 'Think Global, Act Bristol' exhibition on climate change at the M Shed. We co-created a commission piece, working with Bristol makers and a community group to explore Bristol identity and the future of fashion. We used recaptured textile waste from Bristol Waste and included fabric and fibres samples from Bristol Cloth.



VALLEY FEST

We took our clothes swap and repairs to Valley Fest, a local family-focused festival. We were invited to take a pitch in their 'Regen' area alongside established sustainable brands.

SALISBURY MUSEUM WORKSHOP SERIES

We hosted a workshop mini-series for Salisbury Museum, contributing to an engagement programme for their Fashioning Our World project. Speaking to secondary school students, we explored the fashion supply chain and how to build our own sustainable fashion networks.





2022 ACTIVITY



GLOUCESTER UNIVERSITY

In November we joined students from journalism and fashion courses to co-create a magazine piece focusing on sustainable fashion.

TALKS, PANELS & SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGNS

We've participated in a number of talks, panel discussions and some national social media campaigns with organisations such as the Eden Project and Teemill to continue our outreach and message-building.



SUSTAINABLE FASHION WEEK 2022

Sustainable Fashion Week is the first and only fashion week of its kind.

Our annual flagship event in September is an explosion of activity – where people connect with each other in various ways, sharing solutions to support a move away from fast fashion. The SFW 2022 programme was split into three parts: in our hometown Bristol we staged the SFW HUB and the SFW CATWALK. Across the UK we curated a packed **COMMUNITY EVENTS PROGRAMME**.





SFW 2022 // THE HUB

The SFW Hub was a place for sharing information, learning new skills, feeling the joy of clothing and exploring what sustainability in fashion means.

We took over the whole foyer in the iconic Bristol Beacon, with something to explore on each of the four levels - from our curated market packed with sustainable makers through to styling, an augmented reality experience, free repairs, clothes swapping, talks and film screenings.

The Hub had free entry and people from the community could explore as much or as little as they wanted - wandering in and out of the different offerings.

10

talks and panels

16

industry speakers

37

sustainable market traders

1

Junk Kouture Exhibition

8

free skills workshops

2

days of engagement



'Extremely educational, heightened my awareness of the toxicity of the way in which clothes are manufactured and the horrific waste incurred in the fashion industry. I met some wonderful people who really care about our planet...So much to think about, an enormous thank you to everyone involved in this event.'

Jill Maguire on the SFW Hub

Really varied day with lots of activities. Very carefully planned and thought out.

Ceri Maltby on the SFW Hub

'I had a great time at the event. There was so much to see and learn...the location was great. Everyone put a lot of hard work for the day and it felt effortless.'

Ashleigh Chulk on the SFW Hub





SFW 2022 // THE HUB: IMPACT



AUGMENTED REALITY PARTNER // LAYERABLE

“ SFW was an opportunity to exhibit our first public event and essentially launch our brand.

The partnership with SFW has allowed us to understand the types of specialist knowledge and technical offerings we can offer at events and festivals. Through practical offerings in the repair room, we hope people felt empowered to attempt simple mends, to play with unconventional fabrics and undesirable garments in ways that embellish upon and upcycle what they already had, or someone else's waste. This sends a message that the most sustainable things are already in your wardrobe.

SFW provided us with a space to explore how a new audience would respond to a novel immersive experience. This has been incredibly instructive in how we will curate similar experiences in the future. ”



The Hub talks at sustainable fashion week were so interesting. They had some big names in the sustainable style industry do talks and panels - you learn so much so quickly! Really interesting discussions. And I can't believe they were free! Can't wait for next year :)

Sophie Saint on the SFW Hub



SFW 2022 // THE CATWALK



2022 saw us stage our first fashion show. This was a dynamic take on the standard fashion week catwalk - we worked with a host of community partners to showcase sustainability in fashion on the runway.

Each section was based on one of our four call-to-action themes and staged by a collaborative partner. Outfits were created, styled and modelled by students, makers, brands, designers and individuals from the community.



65

sustainable outfits designed, created and modelled by the community

99

participants in the SFW catwalk

We collaborated with local community partners, which included college students, a rental and repair business, a community group and a high profile sustainable fashion brand and Bristol eco hub.

Through the lenses of our four calls to action we saw incredible garments made from upcycled saris, 'trash' and old curtains.

THE COMMUNITY PARTNERS

REWEAR



RECONNECT



REPURPOSE



REGENERATE





SFW 2022 // THE CATWALK: IMPACT



CATWALK PARTNER // BLACK 2 NATURE

“ Collaborating with SFW meant we got involved in an area of environmental sustainability (fast fashion) that we were not going to get seriously involved in for a few more years. We have developed a greater understanding of the effect of fast fashion and the importance of upcycling in terms of saving resources and promoting sustainability. We have also built good links with the Fashion Design Department at University of the West of England.

The people who benefitted were the young people who submitted designs for the catwalk and also the parents of the young people who participated, and the young models who wore the outfits on the runway. We would love to participate in SFW 2023.

We felt the collaboration/partnership helped us reach new audiences - many of the young people who participated in SFW via Black2Nature had little or no knowledge of the work of Black2Nature and its work in the environmental sector and our nature camps prior to SFW. ”

CATWALK PARTNER // CITY OF BRISTOL COLLEGE

“ Students had a tangible industry-related outcome to work towards - right from the start when they were asked to produce fashion illustrations for the show organisers to see, they took the assignment more seriously!

They said that their first experiences of meeting people who worked within the fashion promotion world was very positive, as they were all so friendly. As a result, some students have decided to investigate careers in fashion marketing and addressing sustainability in their next project. For the students the experience has expanded their horizons and built their confidence - they really enjoyed taking part in the show. ”



'It was very well organised, and I felt quite calm as everything was planned'

'An amazing experience and something that I would love to do again'

'I managed to put my pieces in a runway show which I didn't think was going to be possible because it was so out of my comfort zone'



SFW 2022 // THE CATWALK: IMPACT



A really positive, inclusive and joyful evening. Beautiful venue, amazing host.

Lou Foley

The whole experience was fantastic. My daughter had a dress she created at Bristol City College on the catwalk which made it even better! What an opportunity for young talent.

Rachel Whitfield





SFW 2022 // COMMUNITY EVENTS

The heart and soul of the community action - our Community Events Programme was delivered by individuals, organisations, brands and community groups across the UK, throughout September 2022.

We curated a packed programme where participants hosted one-off events (such as a clothes swap or workshop) that aligned with our four calls to action and engaged with their local community and peer groups. We added each event to our online programme and a selection to our printed programme - promoting every one on social media to showcase and support the community action.



COMMUNITY EVENT HOST // ST BARNABAS HOSPICE

“We had overwhelmingly positive feedback from those attending and some great ideas for doing this again in the future. Very positive comments from our customers who loved the concept, many who had never bought clothing this way before.”

26

locations
across the UK

83

community
events

4

countries
across the
globe



SFW 2022 // COMMUNITY EVENTS: IMPACT



SPONSOR & PARTICIPANT // BRISTOL CITY CENTRE BID

“ We partnered with Sustainable Fashion Week to bring a Gen Z slow fashion discussion to Thrift Bristol and what a success it was. Thanks to everyone involved in making it happen.

I've learnt more about sustainable fashion this week than I have since it became 'a thing' and I think we're going to see a big leap forward in this movement over the next few years as the next generation leads the way in terms of what they want to see on our high streets. ”



I'm very grateful for the patience of the 2 guides and their clear explanation of what they were doing. Its given me the much needed confidence and inspiration to get started. My daughter really enjoyed it too so it's very much something we can work on together which I'm thrilled about.

Eileen Bax on the Beginners Sewing workshop

It is so much more believable when you can actually see and talk to a company about their eco wear. There are so many companies out there and I am never sure how honest they are about being eco friendly.

Meet the Brand and Swap attendee

Thank you so much I really enjoyed myself. I'm always nervous with things I'm not 100% on or trying something new, and you made it SEW easy! Thank you.

Reworking with TattyMoo attendee

I just wanted to say again how much I enjoyed the event. It was well organised and a nice break from the "norm". I was delighted to be able to fix one of my items on the spot and draw inspiration from you to repair my trousers.



SFW Stitch Fix Switch attendee



SFW 2022 // SPONSORS



2
sponsors
in kind

8
Sponsor
relationships

7
sectors

SFW and all our engagement activities are still unfunded, so we rely on the goodwill and financial support of our sponsors.

The funds they contribute cover the core costs of delivering our work - enabling us to keep our offerings free or low cost, as we then do not have to charge an entrance fee. Their support means we can deliver skills workshops for free and pay the event speakers, workshop hosts and repair technicians for their time.

As we move into 2023 we'll be looking at how we can secure core funding or enough sponsorship to enable us to build a paid staff team - which will radically alter our ability to collaborate and our national and international reach.

“ It was so great to see such an engaged community (of all ages - amazing to see some passionate youngsters!)
SPONSOR // ANTHESIS ”



SPONSOR // CHARITY RETAIL ASSOCIATION

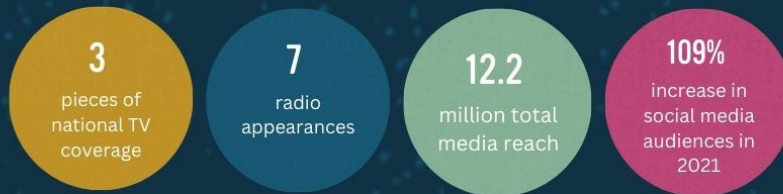
“ SFW allowed the CRA to give more exposure to matters and activities around sustainable fashion. We piloted our own social media event - Charity Shop Fashion Week - which was shown to have legs and will be run bigger and better in 2023. It brought the debate around what our sector can do to combat fast fashion.

We picked up a lot of followers, which showed people were taking notice, and a good chunk of our members took part. The sector has started to debate the more uncomfortable aspects of charity retail and fast fashion, and get members thinking more about how they can market themselves as a sustainable choice on the high street. ”

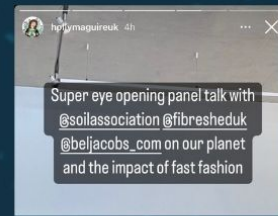


SFW 2022 // ENGAGEMENT & REACH

We were thrilled with the level of traction we received in the press, on the radio and across the different social channels in 2022. With increasing presence in the national media, we can reach more people, build a stronger community and have a greater impact.



Ms Twine says the "enormous shift" towards sustainable fashion often comes with a lot of greenwashing



“ Our wellbeing and the health of the planet are inextricably connected to the production of clothing. Making changes in our fashion habits now will help secure a safe future for us and for communities across the continents. ”

Amelia, SFW Founder

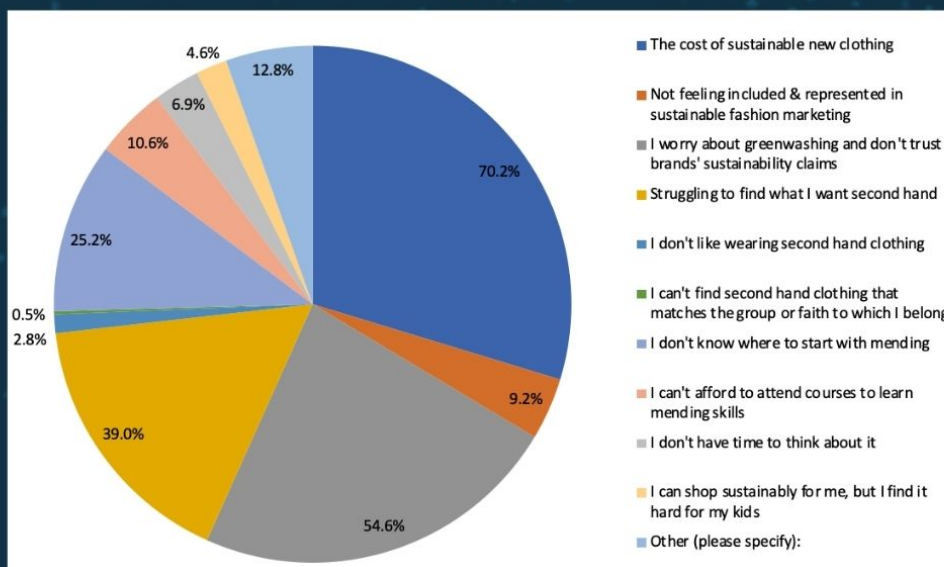


OUR 2022 VALUE SURVEY

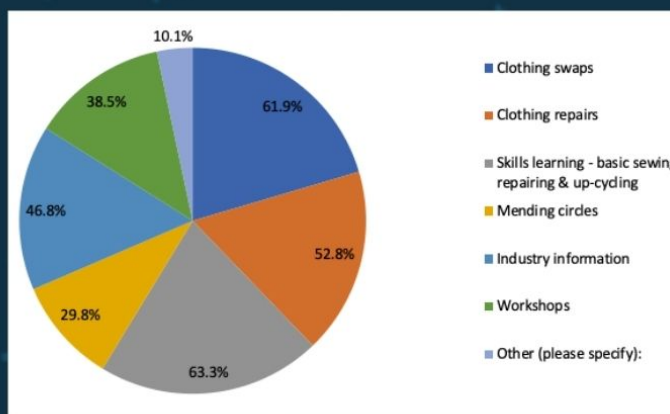
Each year we ask our community about their attitudes towards sustainability in fashion, the barriers they face in making positive changes and what SFW can deliver to support them on their journey. We'll keep asking and keep reviewing what we do and how we do it to make sure we're delivering against demonstrated needs, maintaining our value as we move forward.

Our 2022 survey of over 200 of both event attendees and our broader community audience, we found that the biggest obstacle to becoming more sustainable was the cost of sustainable new clothing. There is a great deal of opportunity for us to share our messaging of not needing to have a big budget - or indeed buy new - to become more sustainable. Clothes swapping, accessible repairs and skills learning were all identified as needs - all of which will feature in our collaboration with the Bristol 'Sparks' project from April 2023.

"What barriers do you face in becoming more sustainable in your fashion habits?"



"What would help you make more sustainable fashion choices?"



88%

of surveyed attendees agreed or strongly agreed that SFW resourced them to take positive action for sustainability.



OUR 2022 VALUE SURVEY

Anonymous feedback from our survey respondents...

It's given me confidence in my skills in mending - I should take more risks now to upcycle more second hand clothes.

I loved the variety of talks, workshops and stalls being held over the weekend. It was so lovely to learn from and connect with so many like minded people!

The biggest thing for me was seeing just how many people showed up [runway show]. Sustainable fashion online doesn't feel like it's widely supported and physically seeing so many people made me feel like a change is actually happening.

I really appreciated the repair room during the event in Bristol Beacon! They were able to repair two items of my clothing that I do not have the skills to repair myself, but in addition while I was waiting they showed me some basic sewing skills and allowed me to practice!

It's helped me by showing me how new clothes can be sustainable and has inspired me to be more creative

I hosted a young person's thrift shop and it has made me more determined to make the event a regular one in my community.

A lot more inspired, hopeful now I've seen the wonderful sense of community and more aware of affordable choices



WORK WITH US

Whether you're an individual, organisation, community group, education provider, museum, brand or institution... We want to ensure people from all backgrounds feel included in the narrative of sustainable fashion and we work to make it feel accessible and relevant, emphasising the different entry points to sustainability through a variety of approaches.

HOW WE WORK

All our activity is non profit. We explore different ways to engage with people in the community through unique and often creative collaborations with individuals and organisations. Each relationship is unique and will respond to what we can offer our partner's audience - whether informative, skills based or wholly creative. We'll build engagement based on where the partner is on their sustainability journey and their desired outcomes for the audience.

WHAT WE OFFER

We offer a range of resources and engagement activities, including:

- Consultancy for projects, creative and educational
- Consultancy for exhibitions
- Creative commissions
- Campaign support
- Skills workshops
- Engagement workshops
- Talks
- Event coordination

WHO BENEFITS

The community // we will work to resource and empower participants of your project or campaign with the skills and knowledge that can enable action. Our company approach is c2c: community to community. If we support people at a grassroots level, we all benefit.

The planet // as we grow our movement for change, including more and more of the UK community, we can collectively move away from the consumption of fast fashion. Our harmful impact on the global environment will reduce and we'll all benefit.

WHAT'S NEXT...

SPARKS



In April, we're coordinating the 'fashion department' of the Sparks alternative department store project - using the old Marks & Spencer building in the centre of Bristol. We'll have a permanent clothes swap and repairs service, rental, styling and sustainable fashion retail.



CONSULTANCY & COLLABORATIONS



We're working on a number of different smaller projects throughout the year. In the early months of 2023 we're providing consultancy for the redevelopment of the Fashion Museum and collaborating on the 'Celebration of Sustainable Textiles & Fashion' event in Truro.

SFW 2023



In 2023, we're broadening our reach by introducing the SFW regional 'Hubs'. Staged across the UK in partnership with other organisations, these Hubs will increase our impact and community. We're building our international presence by including our first overseas partnership for SFW Hub India.



Looking ahead...

We're so excited to be beginning another year of activity. A Single Thread CIC begins 2023 with a new leadership team structure: with two new directors and an Advisory Board, made up of a number of industry stakeholders with varied expertise. This is an opportunity for us to expand and grow, with greater support. We'll be seeking core funding to build a paid staff team after three years of relying on volunteer hours, and will then develop a strong outreach strategy - looking into new ways of engaging with people both nationally and internationally. Our ambitions for SFW are to create a global week (or month) of activity each year, with communities across the continents taking part.

The introduction of regional hubs to SFW 2023 is going to be a brilliant way of reaching the UK community in greater numbers in areas other than Bristol and the South West. They're another demonstration of how collaboration and working in partnership can benefit climate action: sharing resource and building a movement collectively.

This is the same for our role in the Sparks department store, led by the Global Goals Centre and Artspace Lifespace. A multi-partner project, with so many small organisations coming together to give the consumer fresh ways of looking at reuse - including the reuse of the building itself. The iconic Marks & Spencers in Bristol City Centre has been disused since Covid. Reclaiming the space for community benefit and turning consumption on its head.

2023 is going to be a transformational year for A Single Thread CIC, for SFW and for our team. And we're looking forward to sharing each step with you as we grow and evolve.

Maria Loria & Helle Abelvik-Lawson SFW Directors



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