

~~Not~~ Sustainable

MIND

THE GAP

Are the UK's biggest economic, climate and social opportunities being overlooked?

THE BUSINESS REALITY CHECK

Sustainability ambition is set at the top by governments and large organisations. Delivery happens in the middle.

Medium-sized businesses – what we call the “missed middle” – are where national targets, corporate commitments and public policy meet reality.

When these businesses act, entire value chains respond, translating policy, targets and ambition into action and real impact.

But the system is not built for them.

Why the missed middle matter

They make an oversized contribution to the UK economy.

Enablers of
big business



Employ 8 million+
people



Anchor key
supply chains



Support micro +
small businesses



Generate around
£1trillion turnover



Foster resilient
communities



An economic engine hiding in plain sight.

Who are the missed middle?

Not a homogenous group, they:

- Have between 50 and 1,000+ employees

- Have a turnover of £20m to £500m per annum

- Range from early stage to 30+ years' trading history

- Could be family-owned businesses, scale ups or part of a larger company

- Often operate in manufacturing, business services, tech, construction and logistics

~~Not~~ Sustainable

The missed middle's sustainability imperative

Inaction is not sustainable.

Financial
Success
Protection
Recognition of Assets
More Investment
Business Resilience
Top Talent Attraction & Retention
Reduced Disruptions
Innovation
Driver
Legacy
Contract Wins
Competitive Advantage
Stronger Supply Chains
Client Loyalty
Increased Productivity

~~Not~~ Sustainable

The climate + social imperative



SIGNIFICANT EMISSIONS

Generating a significant proportion of the UK's carbon emissions and sitting at the heart of many carbon-heavy sectors, decarbonisation of these businesses is critical to the UK reaching its net zero target.



ECONOMIC ANCHOR

They anchor local economies, create jobs and train workforces, providing meaningful opportunities to many that would otherwise miss out and delivering rising social value requirements.



HEART OF OUR COMMUNITIES

Operating at the heart of our communities and reflecting these communities, these businesses are uniquely placed to understand and respond to local challenges and needs.

Our economic, environmental and social resilience depends on the missed middle.

What could the missed middle gain?

- Understand sustainability risks and opportunities, and align commercially to **build resilience and unlock growth**
- Take a proactive and strategic approach to decarbonisation that delivers meaningful reductions; **driving innovation and efficiencies**
- Move beyond compliance and enable whole supply chains to **drive real change and impact**
- Achieve more with less for local communities, **embedding social value creation into business as usual**
- **Reap the commercial benefits** of, and gain recognition for, sustainability efforts, with clear internal and external engagement

Making it easier, faster and more effective to do the right thing.

Not Sustainable

What is holding the missed middle back?

For better stories, outcomes and impacts, we need to fill the gaps.



POLICY BLIND SPOTS PERSIST

Frameworks and guidance are designed for large corporates with skilled sustainability teams, leaving many mid-sized businesses with no practical action plan for delivery.



INDUSTRY-SPECIFIC SUPPORT GAP

Standards overlap, asks are inconsistent, and sector priorities are unclear. Collaboration across supply chains is limited and rarely supported.



RESOURCE SHORTFALLS

In-house sustainability expertise is limited, business impacts are not well understood. There are budget and capability shortfalls, no clarity on where to focus, or what or how much to change.



ILL-DEFINED BUSINESS CASE

Boardroom expertise is limited in aligning and embedding change to meet business needs. This makes it harder to build momentum and catalyse innovative growth.

A call to action

This sustainability challenge cannot be solved by any one organisation alone.

POLICY MAKERS

Design fit-for-purpose frameworks for medium-sized business reality, capability and ambition. Recognise traditional consultation won't reach those not engaged or confident on this agenda.

LARGE CORPORATE BODIES

Recognise medium-sized suppliers must come with you to cascade demands down the supply chain. They need support on skills and standards, safely without risking relationships.

INDUSTRY + TRADE BODIES

Develop industry-appropriate guidance grounded in medium-sized members' experience and value-chain role. Help them understand stakeholder asks and convene to collaborate.

MEDIA + EVENT ORGANISERS

Recognise the communications gap around medium-sized businesses. Take up your role supporting their needs and celebrating success. Speak to and for them on this agenda.

Want to help drive this change?

This is an invitation not just for the missed middle, but for the people who support them, and those who want to change how the system works.

- The missed middle is not a problem to be fixed

- It is a solution awaiting to be enabled

- If we get this right, we all share the economic, environmental and social rewards

- If we don't, we risk stalling progress where it matters most

Missing the middle is not sustainable.

~~Not~~ Sustainable

Not Sustainable

We are impact-led practitioners, each with over two decades of experience working with mid-sized businesses across many sectors.

We know what works and what doesn't because we've been inside these organisations, balancing ambition with commercial reality.

We also bring an extensive community of like-minded individuals with even broader specialist sustainability knowledge and skills.



Nicki Chennells



Annie Beavis



Rebecca Watson



Kirsteen Harrison

Why we believe...

The missed middle is primed to succeed



"These leaders have hands-on understanding of their businesses and clients. With flat structures, they are fully connected to their commercial reality and can make decisions and take action at unmatched speed."

NICKI



"These businesses are led with entrepreneurial spirit. They can see the commercial advantages from being more responsible in their community and how focusing on sustainable innovation helps them lead the pack."

ANNIE



"The culture of mid-sized organisations is shaped by what their leaders value and how they want to be remembered. When they focus on long-term success and legacy, they can make a big impact quickly."

REBECCA



"The agility of mid-sized businesses is a real superpower. It helps them innovate, stay ahead of clients' evolving sustainability requirements, and remain connected to their workforce and local communities."

KIRSTEEN

How can we support you to drive change?

Our role is not to replace existing efforts but to amplify them.



EXTENSIVE EXPERTISE

Knowledge, pragmatic guidance and signposting - aligned to industry need and commercial imperative - to accelerate impactful change.



SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Practical training, advisory support and mentorship tailored to medium-sized businesses to build capability and accelerate action.



PARTNERSHIP BROKERING

Support to build collaborative networks connecting corporates, the missed middle and funders to unlock value chain impact.



THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

Roundtables, insights, speaking and narrative-shaping aligned to industry need and focused on the missed middle.

What we offer the missed middle

We empower organisations to change from within.

EXPERT ADVICE

Workshops to support strategy, help to develop roadmaps for sustainable transformation, and progress distinct sustainability priorities.

MENTORING + UPSKILLING

Access to coaching, mentoring and training to help an organisation's leaders and teams to deliver impactful change and develop internal capability.

STRATEGY SOUNDING BOARD

Understand own impact, what commitments market and stakeholders expect, how an organisation compares to competitors, where to focus for commercial success.

TRAINING + IMPACT

Guidance sessions on issues like carbon reduction, social value and greenwashing, strengthening sustainability proposition, and enabling staff engagement and contribution.

**Are you ready
to unlock the
UK's greatest
untapped
advantage?**

EMAIL

hello@notsustainable.co.uk

WEB

www.notsustainable.co.uk

LINKEDIN

[/company/not-sustainable](#)