

IMPOWER

YOUR AMBITION. DELIVERED.

ANNUAL REPORT 2026

Your Ambition. Delivered.

CEO foreword	4
Our mission	5
The year at a glance	6
Our team	7
Case studies	9
• Nottingham University Hospitals	10
• Department for Education	11
• Northamptonshire Children’s Trust	12
• Impact in brief	13
Capabilities spotlight	16
• Technology and innovation	
Leadership	18
Looking ahead	19

A message from our CEO

IMPOWER enters FY27 with clarity, confidence and purpose.

The market remains demanding: public sector consultancy spend is under scrutiny, competition is intensifying, particularly around local government reorganisation, and NHS procurement continues to be complex. Yet this environment also creates opportunity. SEND reform, prevention, more certain local government funding and medium-term NHS planning point to sustained demand for the kind of complex transformation support where IMPOWER has deep, proven expertise.

FY26 was not defined solely by constrained financial performance. It was a year of deliberate repositioning: strengthening the platform from which we can grow. We expanded into adjacent markets, including local government reorganisation, broader NHS advisory work, and leisure and culture; sharpened our focus on higher-value opportunities; and built a broader client base capable of supporting larger, more scalable engagements.



SEAN HANSON
Chief Executive Officer, IMPOWER

We also invested in what makes IMPOWER distinctive: our people, methods and culture. Our refreshed learning and development offer, the launch of the Complex Transformation Academy, enhanced CRM and HR systems, and continued investment in analytics tools and products all strengthen our ability to deliver bigger, more complex programmes with quality and confidence. Industry recognition, thought leadership and benchmarking products have further reinforced our market position, as well as the proportion of our staff receiving accredited chartered management consultant status.

FY27 is about converting that investment into growth: expanding in local government, building NHS revenue beyond Valuing Home and the Neighbourhoods agenda, and maintaining strength in children's social care, adult social care and SEND. With 82% employee engagement, Sunday Times Best Places to Work recognition and a growing team, IMPOWER is well placed to deliver.

Our mission

To deliver our clients' ambitions by leading complex transformation with head and heart, powered by ethical people motivated to create sustainable impact and better lives.

'Your Ambition. Delivered.' is more than a tagline; it is a statement of intent. It reflects who we are and the standard we hold ourselves to, across every engagement: being ambition-focused and client-centred, driving transformation of complex systems, and delivering sustainable, measurable outcomes and real return on investment for the communities we serve.

Our market-leading analytical tools and delivery capabilities help clients identify new value, stretch their ambition, build coalitions for change, and deliver results at scale. We use our accredited EDGEWORK® approach and insights from the IMPOWER INDEX to equip our experienced consulting teams with the ability to deliver change in complex systems.

EDGEWORK® - OUR THEORY OF CHANGE

Our EDGEWORK® methodology and theory of change is a proven and unique way to co-produce organisational change and shift mindsets. Setting the right ambitions and finding new value is the first step of our four-step process and key to sustainable change.



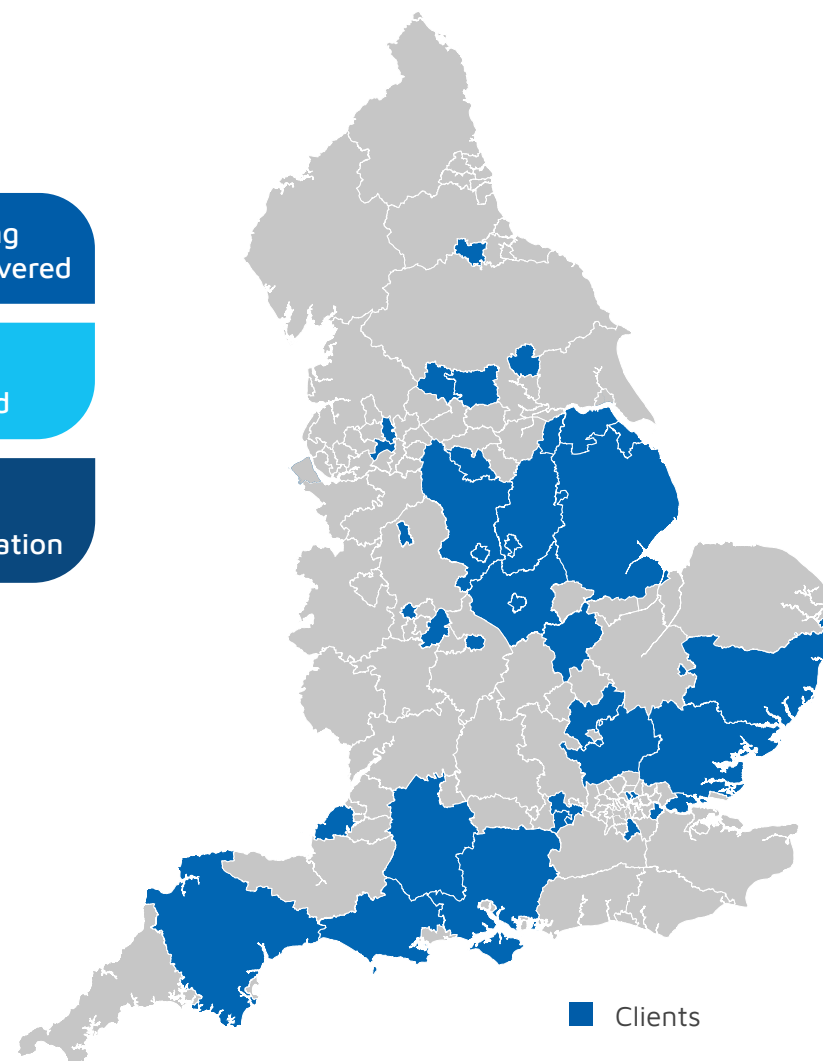
The year at a glance

10,500 Consulting days delivered

£270m Savings identified

100% Client recommendation

48 Clients supported



IMPOWER IN THE MARKET

We are incredibly proud that our work has been recognised by clients and peers across multiple sectors. In FY26:

- We maintained our 100% client recommendation rate for a second consecutive year.
- Consultancy.UK's rankings recognised us as a Platinum Level consultancy across the public sector and the number one consultancy in local government.
- We were included in the Financial Times UK's Leading Management Consultants 2026 list.



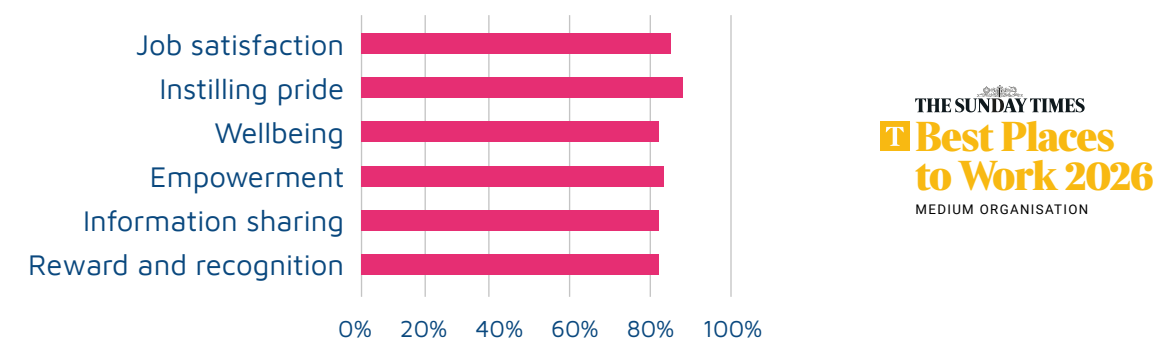
Our team

Our people are central to our mission. They come from a diverse range of backgrounds from chartered consultants, analysts and accountants to former special educational needs co-ordinators, doctors, teachers and social workers.

In FY26, we boosted the strength and credentials of our team through:

- 18 new joiners, bolstering our offer with proven expertise in people services, corporate transformation, health and analytics.
- Increasing the proportion of our consulting team who are accredited chartered management consultants from 15% to nearly 40%.
- Being shortlisted for four Management Consultancies Association (MCA) awards.
- Completion of a wide-ranging learning and development plan.

THE SUNDAY TIMES BEST PLACES TO WORK



We took part in The Sunday Times Best Places to Work survey for the first time in March 2026. Across the survey, we scored 'excellent' in all six areas of the employee experience. We are now an accredited Sunday Times Best Place to Work with an overall 82% engagement score.

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS



As part of our work and dedication to co-production in driving change, we invest in establishing long-term strategic partnerships, both from sector representative bodies and from other professional consultancies to leverage specialist capabilities.

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES



Our guiding principles, agreed collaboratively across IMPOWER, inform both how we work and the choices that we make as an organisation

VOLUNTEERING & CSR

IMPOWER gives two days per person annually for volunteering activity. Our CSR activities include volunteer days, fundraising and practical support (such as 'Wrap Up London'). We also support charities aligned with our clients including offering work placements and internships to care-experienced young adults from client authorities.

SOCIAL VALUE TO CLIENTS

We are committed to delivering social value for our clients. In FY26 this included paid internships for care leavers; a range of skills development workshops delivered to clients and partners; and the donation of laptops to support digital inclusion.

OUR COMMITMENTS WITH EXTERNAL BODIES

DISABILITY CONFIDENT

In addition to supporting our staff, as accredited signatories to the scheme, we offer guaranteed interviews to disabled and neurodiverse applicants for roles and organise work placements for these under-represented groups.

EARLY CAREERS FOUNDATION

10 members of our team supported young people as mentors as part of our ongoing partnership with the Early Careers Foundation (ECF) focused on supporting young people from socio-economically deprived school areas.

CARBON LITERATE

IMPOWER is an accredited Carbon Literate Organisation, training our people to understand and minimise our carbon footprint. We carbon-offset our travel and have recently introduced a default 'green' pension scheme ensuring our funds are invested sustainably.

MCA CONSULTING EXCELLENCE

As a proud MCA member and signatory to Consulting Excellence, IMPOWER adopts the fourteen principles of the scheme through our codes of practice and day-to-day operations.

Case studies

NOTTINGHAM UNIVERSITY HOSPITALS

Hospital Discharge Programme

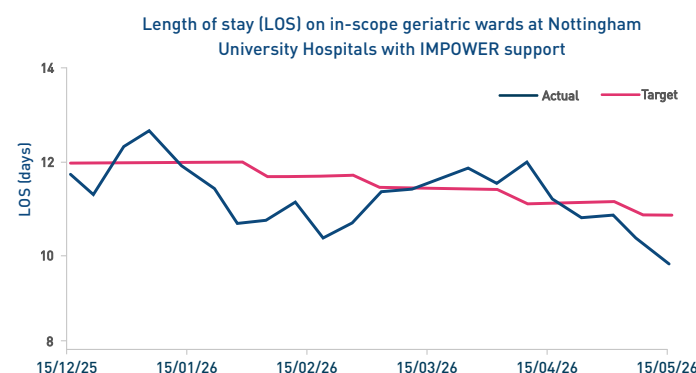
Dec 2025 to May 2026

AMBITION

Nottingham University Hospitals (NUH) partnered with IMPOWER to unlock acute capacity and improve outcomes for older patients by transforming discharge across six geriatric wards. Building on a successful proof of concept, IMPOWER was commissioned to scale a new model of flow improvement across the Trust. The ambition was to achieve a two-day reduction in length of stay, release thousands of bed days and establish a sustainable, high-performing discharge culture.

2.7-day

Reduction in average length of stay (11.4 to 8.7 days)



DELIVERED

IMPOWER combined frontline improvement expertise, behavioural change and real-time operational analytics to transform how discharge was managed across six geriatric wards. Working shoulder-to-shoulder with clinical teams, we redesigned ward operating rhythms, introduced actionable performance intelligence and embedded escalation routes that enabled faster decision-making.

Through intensive coaching, visible leadership support and our discharge co-ordinator methodology, teams shifted from reactive discharge planning to proactive flow management. The behaviours, governance and ownership we embedded will ensure sustainable improvement for the long-term.

What our client says

“Our work with IMPOWER has felt different to previous work in this area. The IMPOWER team stood alongside our teams on board and ward rounds, walked the corridors and helped make change happen. You have delivered what you said you would, and you have done so in a supportive way.”
Dr Tasso Gazis, Clinical Director for Medicine Care Group with NUH

DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION

SEND and Alternative Provision Improvement Programme

July 2023 to March 2026

AMBITION

In 2023 England's SEND and alternative provision system was facing rising demand, financial strain and inconsistent local practices. Through its SEND and AP Improvement Plan, the Department for Education set out reforms to strengthen inclusion and build more sustainable local systems.

The Department appointed the Reaching Excellence and Ambition for all Children (REACH) Consortium, consisting of IMPOWER, PA Consulting, the Council for Disabled Children and Olive Academies, to test those reforms in live conditions across the country, learn quickly what worked, and feed that learning back into national policy without losing momentum.

DELIVERED

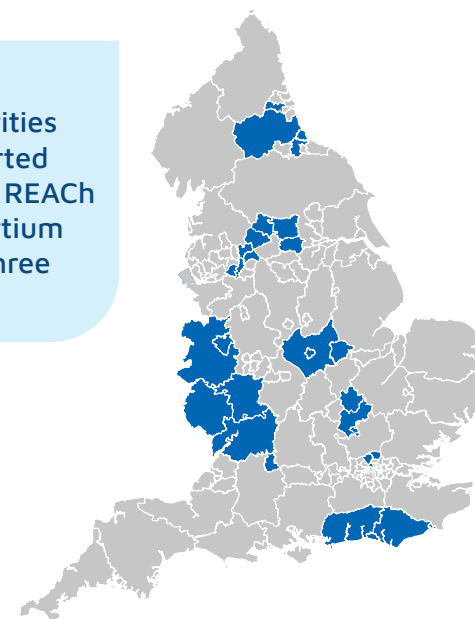
Within the REACH consortium, IMPOWER shaped and ran a test-and-learn approach spanning nine regional Change Programme Partnerships. We gave local areas direct support, used our EDGEWORK methodology and theory of change to structure delivery, and created feedback loops between real world practice and policy in DfE.

This turned local insight into usable intelligence for DfE policy teams, building the evidence base for embedding inclusive, early-intervention approaches that reduce need for specialist support over time. This allowed the department to pivot to the most effective approaches as needed and supported the design of the UK Government's March 2026 SEND Reforms.

What our client says

“Working with IMPOWER, as part of the REACH Consortium, has added significant value to our programme. Their expertise in system leadership, facilitation, and co-design has helped us think bigger while staying grounded in practical delivery. They've supported us to draw insights from across the region, challenged our assumptions constructively, and acted as a critical friend throughout.”
Jacqui Dundas, Head of Service for Education and Inclusion, Wakefield Council

32 Local authorities supported by the REACH consortium over three years



NORTHAMPTONSHIRE CHILDREN'S TRUST

Children's social care change programme

Ongoing programme since Feb 2023

AMBITION

Northamptonshire Children's Trust (NCT) was seeking to improve outcomes for children and young people while addressing growing demand and financial pressures across services. Working towards its ambition of becoming a high-performing service, NCT needed a clearer understanding of how investment translated into outcomes.

IMPOWER's analysis revealed little correlation between children's assessed needs, the cost of their placements and the outcomes being achieved. This created an opportunity to transform decision-making by linking needs, support and spend through a more evidence-led approach.

£20.5m

Total savings since Feb 2023

£14m+

Annual savings by year three of the programme

DELIVERED

Combining advanced analytics with practitioner expertise, we codified children's assessments across 13 need domains, enabling teams to consistently identify, track and respond to changing needs over time. This gave practitioners and commissioners unprecedented visibility of where spend was - and wasn't - delivering value.

By connecting frontline practice with strategic commissioning decisions, NCT was able to target interventions more effectively, challenge assumptions around placement decisions and build a more robust, outcomes-focused approach to managing demand and cost.

What our client says

“IMPOWER's support over the last three years has helped us to improve life chances for many children and young people in Northamptonshire. I've really appreciated how the IMPOWER team have worked with frontline teams and partners to embed new ways of working, and their constant focus on children's needs and strengths.” Colin Foster, Chief Executive, Northamptonshire Children's Trust

Impact in brief

Client perspectives

IMPOWER acted as strategic development and implementation partner to **Hertfordshire's** 11 councils as they look to reorganise under the biggest changes to local government in more than half a century.

“IMPOWER were an important part of the team, not just crunching the numbers but supporting and nudging chief executives and senior leaders in the right direction.”

Angie Ridgwell, Chief Executive of Hertfordshire County Council

IMPOWER helped **North Lincolnshire Council** strengthen the financial sustainability of culture and leisure services while protecting community impact. Working with officers and frontline staff, we built an evidence-led picture of cost, usage and outcomes across the portfolio, identifying up to £8m savings, while reframing services within the council's prevention and wellbeing system.

“IMPOWER have been our resilience partner: they have worked with us so that we can do this. The project has connected with the workforce and unlocked engagement and capability. Everyone who has been touched by the project has learned something.”

Lesley Potts, Director of Communities, North Lincolnshire Council

IMPOWER built **Hampshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust** an integrated demand, capacity and finance model to support the business cases for their New Hospital Programme. This has given them a sustainable tool for robust scenario planning, better-informed decision-making and enhanced confidence in future hospital planning.

“IMPOWER's collaborative approach, technical expertise and commitment to delivery have been instrumental in helping us build a model that is both robust and adaptable.” Natasha Kerrigan, Programme Director, Hampshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

IMPOWER worked alongside **Darlington Borough Council** to embed outcomes-focused adult social care practice. Through diagnostic analysis, case reviews and workforce development, we helped teams identify opportunities to increase independence and reduce reliance on high-cost care, uncovering over **£10m of savings opportunities**.

“Their insight and constructive challenge helped us strengthen decision-making, create efficiencies and reduce avoidable expenditure, so we can reinvest resources where they make the greatest difference for residents.” Joss Harbron, Assistant Director of Adult Services, Darlington Borough Council

IMPOWER undertook an independent assessment of the performance of **Birmingham City Council's (BCC)** Local Authority Trading Company, producing a report that enabled informed evaluation by BCC's leaders of options for the future delivery or commissioning of services.

“This was a challenging brief... The clarity and insight in the report will be instrumental in shaping our next steps.” David Morrissey, Group Managing Director, Acivico

Capabilities spotlight

Our bespoke analytics tools and approach

In FY26, we further elevated our analytics practice, developing both our people and toolkit to continue to meet our clients' evolving needs and make use of the latest technical innovations. We invested in growing the team, reflecting the increasing demand in projects for specialist skills, and in training our analysts to undertake best in class analysis

using customised tools that clients value. Alongside delivery, the team has also run training sessions for the wider business to embed a higher baseline level of analytical skill across our delivery teams. Next year, we have ambitions to go even further in developing our capabilities across analytics.

OUR ANALYTICS PRODUCTS

IMPOWER INDEX

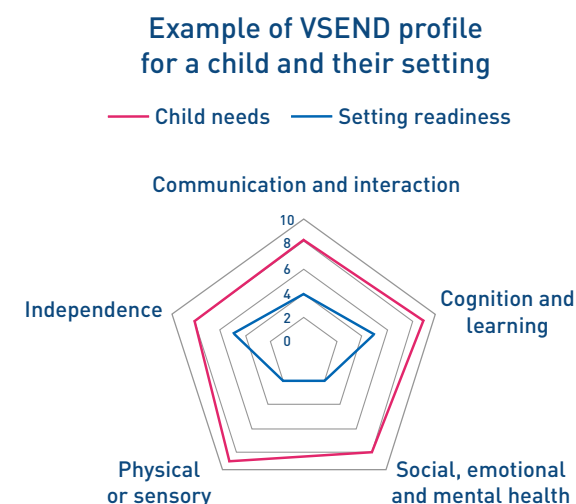
The INDEX, which benchmarks council performances on productivity, is a flagship analytical product. Following its redevelopment in FY25, in FY26 it was expanded, adding new deeper lenses covering service areas such as Waste & Recycling and Homelessness. We were also directly commissioned by a collective of five Fire and Rescue Services to develop a new productivity INDEX tool for their services, marking the first development outside local government. In FY27, further developments will add a new Inclusion lens to the INDEX as well as additional components focussing on prevention, hyperlocal geography and deprivation.

In addition to deployment on client projects, the INDEX continued to be central to business development and underpinned our FY26 productivity campaign, which was supported by the sector press, including a series of features in sector press (The MJ).

VALUING LIVES

Our Valuing Lives platform is a digital tool used by professionals to undertake regular, consistent needs profiles of individuals. It is deployed both on consulting projects and as a standalone subscription service.

In FY27, we will continue to add functionality to the platform, including ensuring the Valuing SEND module fully aligns with the DfE SEND reforms, and expect to increase the number of subscriptions, having now appointed a dedicated Product Director.



OUR ANALYTICS TOOLKIT

AURISTA

In FY26, we laid the groundwork for developing Aurista, an advanced platform that draws insight from unstructured datasets. Based on our experience of earlier products and testing generative AI in FY26, we will build Aurista from the ground up in FY27. The AI is informed by IMPOWER's knowledge base such as our Valuing Lives frameworks to surface insight such as sentiments, clusters, inconsistencies, risks and prioritised opportunities, at scale, that otherwise can lie hidden in clients' data. The initial focus has been centred on case notes in Children's Social Care, with further rollouts planned.

TRAJECTORY MANAGEMENT

Responding to client demand, in FY26 we codified our approach to trajectory management. These models forecast the impact of system changes by combining detailed historic data with local insight. This enables local authorities to test scenarios before acting, set an ambition, and track impact from change over time.

Our suite of trajectory models ensures we always provide a consistent approach and both delivery teams and clients are able to understand the insight they bring.

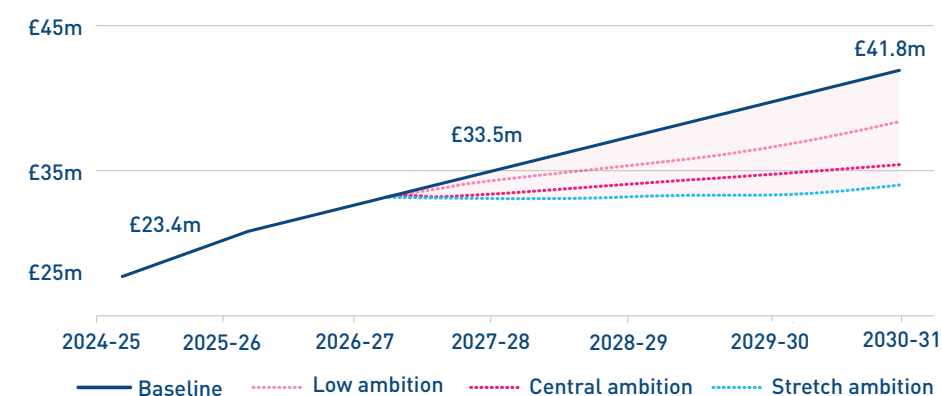
JOURNEY MINING

Journey Mining draws out insight into how residents are moving through local systems as they access public services. In FY26, this was particularly insightful on Adult Social Care projects to better understand the steps residents take to access support. Our approach is being redeveloped in FY27, making use of new AI tools to shorten the time to structure point-in-time events into more accessible and interrogatable data models.

REPEATABLE INSIGHTS

In FY26, we refined our impact tracking capability by enhancing our skills in PowerBI to build dashboards that allowed clients to directly understand and make decisions on insights. Into FY27 this will help us develop a new approach to support clients through ongoing analytical support after broader consulting delivery has completed.

Children in Care: example baseline trajectory and ambition scenarios



Our executive leadership team



SEAN HANSON
Chief Executive
Officer



PERRY DOWELL
Chief Finance
Officer



JON AINGER
Executive Director



MARK LLOYD
Executive Director



JEREMY COOPER
Executive Director



DEBORAH CROSSAN
Managing Director



EBONY HUGHES
Managing Director



BEN EVANS
Managing Director



JAMES SWAFFIELD
Managing Director

We bring together head and heart to create an environment where individuals feel supported, positively challenged and valued.

We're extremely proud of the whole IMPOWER team and of our energising and inclusive culture. IMPOWER is a place where your opinions and contributions matter, where diversity is celebrated, where we look out for each other and where we believe that work should be both challenging and fun.

Our plans for the coming year

Turbocharging our client offer

Driven by changing political and economic circumstances, we know that our clients are seeking new and greater capabilities in FY27. We are looking to meet those needs through our Complex Transformation Academy, new digital toolkit, learning and development offer, strategic partnerships and targeted recruitment.

Building our impact in the NHS

We have a strong track record of delivery with NHS clients, targeting their priority issues. In FY27 we will bring the strength of that offer to more clients through targeted advocacy, case studies and health advisors supported by consistent brand positioning.

Investing in digital and AI

We will continue to invest in and grow capabilities, including applied analytics, creating new and developing existing AI and digital products. This will include development of our INDEX, bespoke AI tools and enhancing our Valuing Lives platform.

Scaling while retaining our identity as a mission-led organisation

We will continue to invest in systems, people and processes that support our growth while maintaining our commitment to social value, diversity, equity and inclusion.





in IMPOWER Consulting
🦋 @impower.bsky.social
T: +44 (0)20 7017 8030
E: enquiries@impower.co.uk
W: impower.co.uk

Design: TP Creative



IMPOWER

YOUR AMBITION. DELIVERED.