

Positive.News

Annual Review 2023—2024

2023

2024



I became a Positive News supporter because I believe in your organisation and want it to succeed. Keep up the great journalism, you're making the world better. I can now mentally offset the negative news bias by knowing there's so much good going on. Thank you!

– Scott C, supporter

Pushing solutions forward

Sean Wood, CEO

As an independent media organisation with a small team, we're always refining what we do in order to get the most out of our limited resources and create the best journalism we can for you to enjoy. Sometimes though, we're able to do some bigger things, and last year was one of those times.

With competition from far-better resourced international titles, we were proud to be awarded a significant grant to report on solutions to mental health challenges in economically developing countries. This meant we could, for the first time, go deep on a single themed series across a 12-month period, train and recruit solutions journalists on the ground in far away places, hire translators and, more recently (after the period covered by this review), launch a podcast.

Meanwhile, in another major milestone, we secured a partnership with an advertising company to display our headlines on digital screens across the UK, reaching millions of members of the public. These developments among others within the April 2023 to March 2024 period that this review covers, helped us continue our trajectory of growth as a business and to have an influence disproportionate to our size within the media industry.

The press remains untrusted, with a declining number of people interested in the news and few willing to pay for it. Negative news continues to make people feel anxious and powerless, with 39% of people in the UK now avoiding the news, according to the latest stats from the Reuters Institute. So, yes, you're far from alone. "It's not just that the news can be depressing," states their report, "it is also relentless". Many feel "worn out" and "overloaded" by the news, "frequently mentioning the way that coverage of wars, disasters, and politics is squeezing out other things".

We continue to push back against that squeeze. It's far from easy, with our industry in an economic "crisis" according to that Reuters report, and with the struggle to win attention in a noisy information environment. But we're pushing with a belief in the prevailing good in humanity and a spotlight on the evidence for it; and we're pushing with the strength of our community of supporters. So, if you haven't already, please join us as a supporter, and we'll push for some even bigger things next. 📍



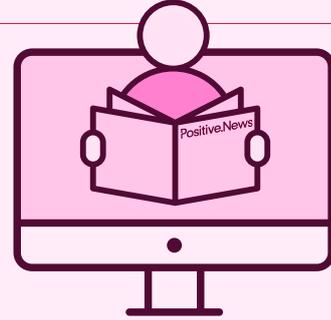
www.positive.news/support

Year in numbers

Audience

Digital and print readers

2.5 million



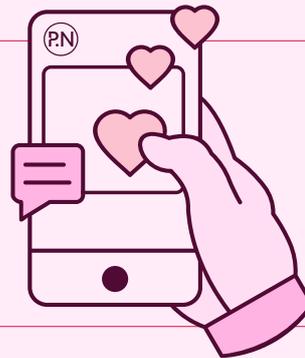
People reached via outdoor display

9.5 million



Social media impressions

13 million

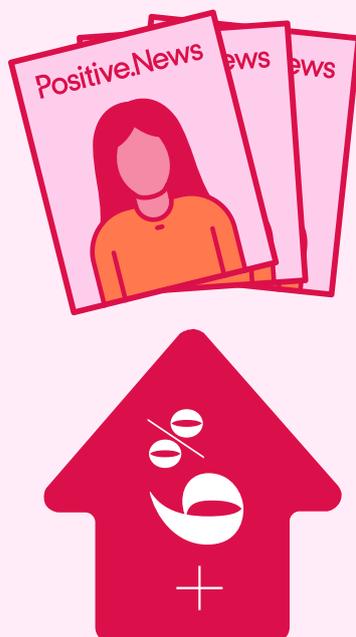


Growth

Email newsletter subscribers:



Magazines distributed:



Income:



Supporter contributions:



Five highlights of our journalism



Lucy Purdy,
Editor-in-
chief

1: What we loved the most

Holding forth on why he’s an angry yet hopeful ‘old’ man, conservationist and TV presenter Chris Packham was our magazine cover star in January. During an interview that took place at his New Forest home, he revealed his zeal

for unleashing the power of young people to protect the planet and insisted that he’s not the next David Attenborough. We loved uncovering details about what makes Packham tick, from his passion for punk to his capacity for self-reflection.

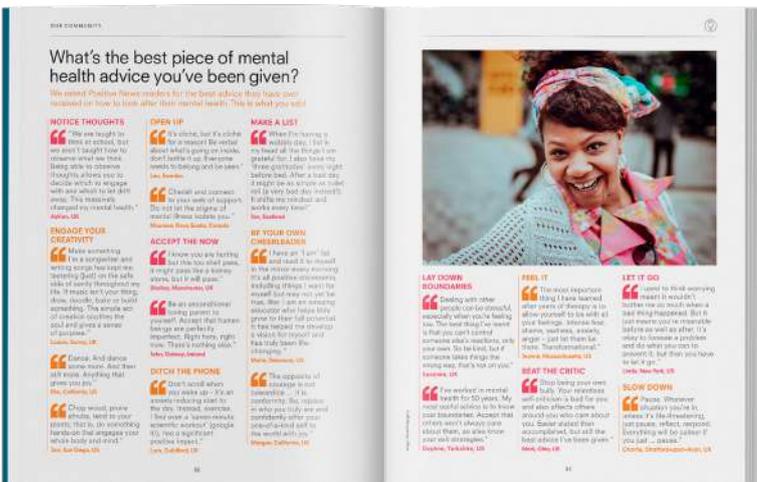
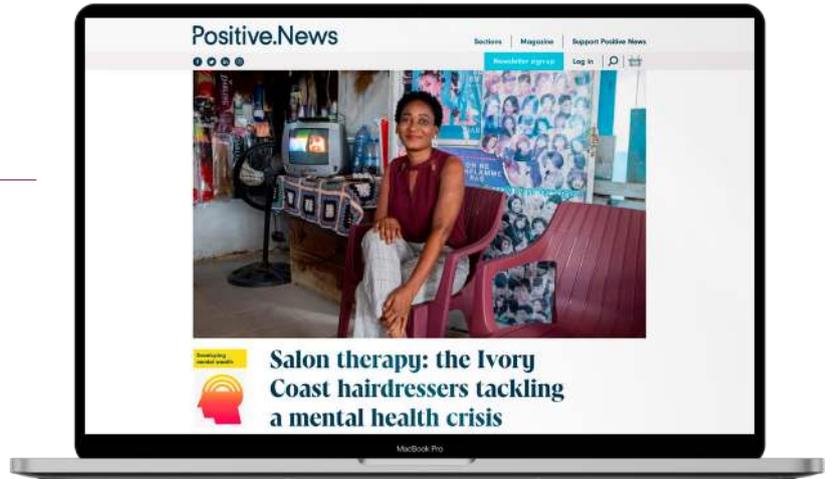


2: What you loved the most

Bite-sized and to the point, our weekly What went right? roundups continued to top the table of our most-visited articles. Otherwise, a feature in our Let’s Live Together series about an off-grid community called Tinkers Bubble, hidden in a woodland in Somerset, England, proved popular. Clicks abounded too for our reporting on the world’s best cities to live in, breakthroughs in battery technology for electric vehicles, and an article about eight habits that could add years to your life. So, here’s to living together, living in great cities, living longer, and going electric!

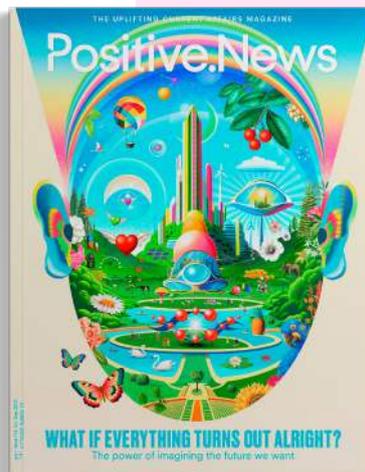
3: What was special

In our Developing Mental Wealth series, we took a deep dive into the fascinating ways that low-cost community projects are supporting people’s mental health in places where circumstances can be the most challenging. The year-long series reported from on the ground in countries such as Guatemala and Zimbabwe, where conflict, gender inequality and the climate crisis are pressing. We unearthed stories such as: hairdressers in Ivory Coast who are training as mental health ambassadors and offering accessible support to their clients; and a movement to empower neurodivergent people in Peru.



4: How did we share your voice?

Ever aware of the great wisdom present in our community, we expanded our sharing of readers’ views during this period. We harvested your thoughts on a diverse spread of topics, each time publishing a handpicked sample of responses. Questions posed included: how have you liberated your gardens from the tyranny of tarmac? What habits have most improved your life? and: how do you challenge or avoid consumerism?



5: What was unique

What if everything turns out alright? read the deliberately provocative coverline of the July 2023 issue of Positive News magazine. With the mainstream news full of catastrophic scenarios that could befall humanity, we decided to uncover some heartening visions instead. After all, how will things turn out better if we can’t even imagine it? So, from a freshly stable climate to astonishing species comebacks, we brought you the news from 2050, where everything has turned out well. You won’t have read it anywhere else.

Highlights of the year



Our headlines reached millions via outdoor digital displays

In January 2024, we launched an uplifting campaign to inspire the British public on a scale we'd never achieved before. Headlines about what's going right in the world were shared with millions of people through digital screens on high streets and in shopping centres all around the UK. The campaign was the first in a new partnership with outdoor advertising company Clear

Channel UK. Over a period of five months, a selection of our news stories – from medical breakthroughs to innovations in renewable energy and wildlife conservation successes – were displayed on Clear Channel's 3,500-plus digital advertising screens. In the first three months to the end of March 2024, the posters had reached an estimated 9.5m people.

We got the fuel to accelerate our journalism

In a first for Positive News, in April 2023 we were awarded a year-long grant as part of a programme designed to support media across Europe to carry out more solutions-focused reporting on social and economic development in the global south. The fund felt like a perfect fit for our work and gave us an exciting opportunity to expand into development journalism, through our Developing Mental Wealth series. It meant

that we could work with journalists and photographers on the ground in economically developing countries, and while doing so, we delivered solutions journalism training to reporters in Kenya, Guatemala, Peru, Nigeria and Ivory Coast. Positive News editors attended two bootcamps with other grantees, where they were able to share knowledge. We also recruited a group of readers to regularly

feed back on articles in the series, to help us measure our impact. Finally, as we approached the end of the financial year, we began work on our first ever podcast, based on the series.

The funding was awarded by the European Journalism Centre, through the Solutions Journalism Accelerator. The fund is supported by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

 European Journalism Centre

 SOLUTIONS JOURNALISM NETWORK

 BILL & MELINDA GATES foundation



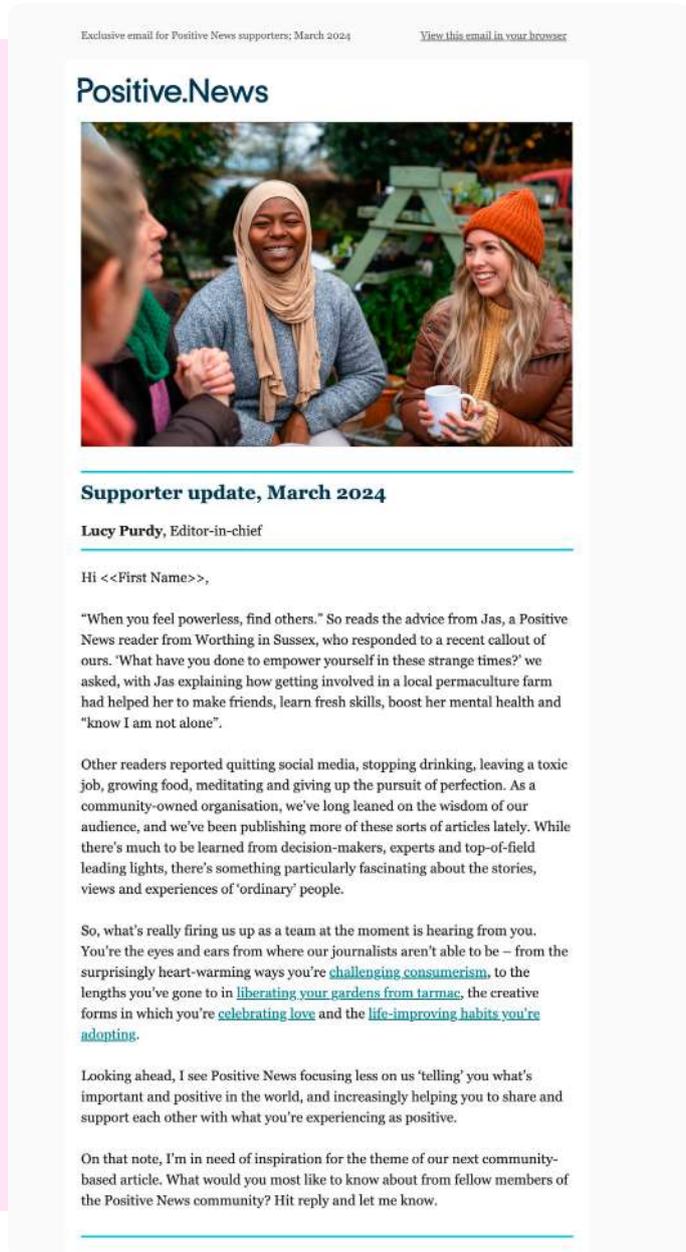
Isabel Romero and Miriam Mendez, co-founders of the Buena Semilla project in Guatemala. Credit: James Rodríguez

Our biggest highlight of the year

It was your support, of course! Positive News wouldn't exist without the financial backing of our supporters and magazine subscribers. The regular contributions that readers make help to cover the costs of continually producing and sharing our unique, uplifting journalism.

Funding from supporters continued to increase this year, which is of vital importance as we look to sustain and grow Positive News into the future.

Through our monthly newsletter exclusively for supporters, we shared exciting behind-the-scenes updates and invited views on questions ranging from whether Positive News should help people to take action, to what podcasts you listen to. The insights from supporters' responses help us to keep building Positive News in a way that best meets your needs, because, as a community benefit society, we're here to serve you, and your support is the lifeblood of our organisation.



Positive News declared one of 'the UK's most impactful ventures'

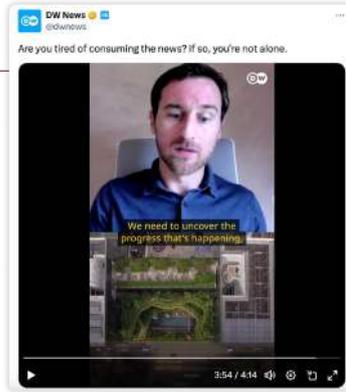
We were honoured to have been selected for the BE100, a prestigious list of high-impact businesses that are disrupting their industries in a positive way. Curated by the Blue Earth Summit, an event supporting a shift towards more regenerative business practices, the list recognised the top 100 innovative companies that are leading this transition.



Press coverage

Solutions in Germany

In July 2023, our CEO, Seán Wood, was interviewed by German broadcaster Deutsche Welle (DW) for a video about delivering the news more constructively. DW appear to be committed to moving away from the negativity bias, having founded the non-profit Bonn Institute, which wants to help journalism to “serve people better and strengthen democracy” by “making it more solutions-orientated, richer in perspective and increasingly dialogue-based”.



G'day for good news

Australia's national broadcaster, ABC, invited our associate editor, Gavin Haines, on to the station in December 2023, to share some of the top positive news stories from the past year. Digging into the fascinating details of our What Went Right 2023 round up, Gavin was a guest on the Nightlife radio show, talking to host Suzanne Hill about the progress that happened in areas such as health, the environment and social projects.

New options for news-avoiders

Around four in 10 people in the UK say that they sometimes or often avoid the news, up 10 percentage points in six years. This was among the annual research findings from the Reuters Institute in 2023, and it was within this context that Daisy Greenwell, our editor at the time, was invited on to several BBC radio shows to talk about why so many people are switching off. For the first time, the report highlighted the importance of positive and solution-focused news.



Seeing clearly

More column inches followed in February 2024, thanks to our partnership with outdoor advertising company Clear Channel UK, which saw our hopeful headlines appear on digital screens across the country. Press Gazette, the most visited media

news website in the English-speaking world, reported on our campaign, and Positive News CEO, Seán Wood, was also interviewed on the Journalism.co.uk podcast. Other outlets covering the story included a magazine in Japan.



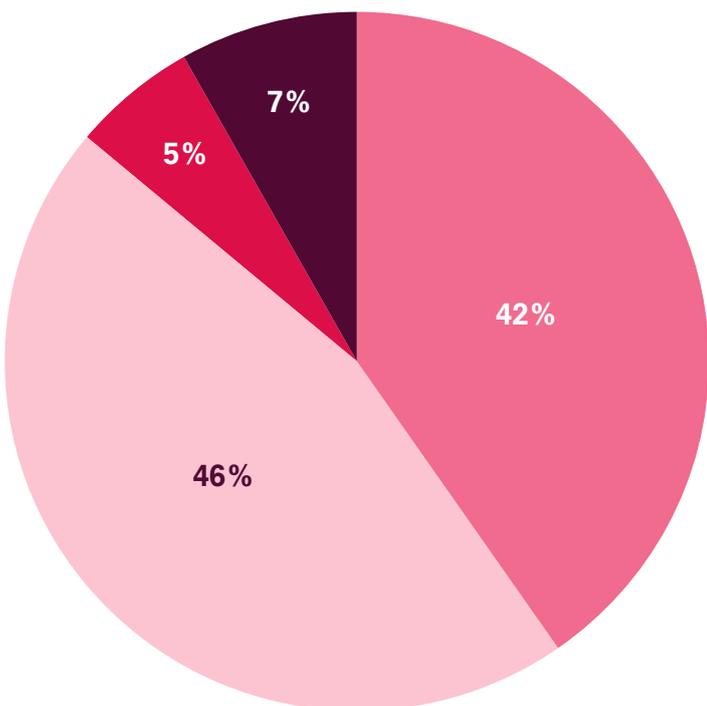
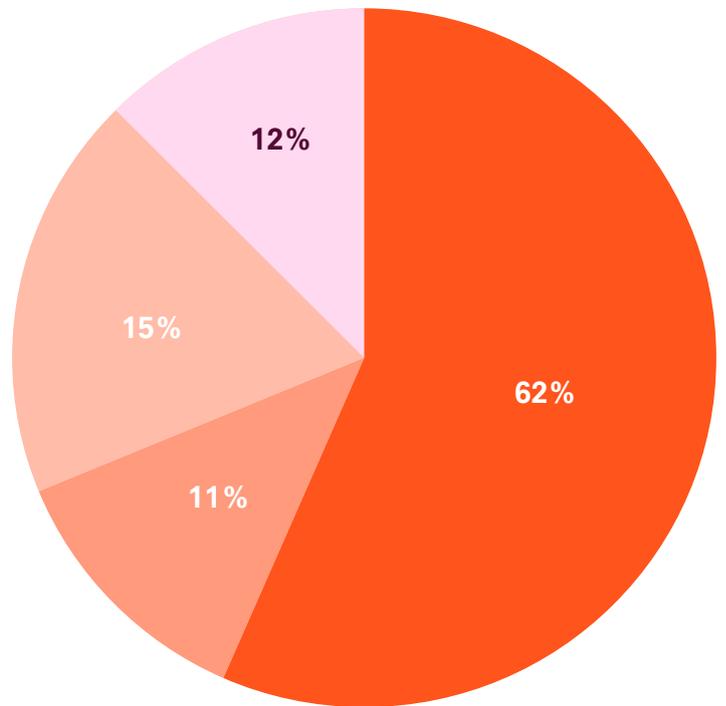
Financial overview

During 2023-24, Positive News grew its operating revenue by 2% and – with the addition of grant funding – grew total income by 15%. In line with our plans, the highest rate of revenue growth came from supporter contributions, which rose 23% and increased as a portion of our revenue mix by two percentage points. Income growth

enabled us to expand our team to a peak of eight employees, increase editorial expenditure, absorb pressure from the rising costs of print production, and apply a small increase to our marketing and website development budgets; all of which helped to drive the impact of our journalism for the benefit of the community.

How we earned income and how it was spent

Income 2023–24 →



← Expenditure 2023–24



*All financial numbers in this report are indicative only, stated in accordance with our trading reality and based on unaudited draft accounts before annual accounting adjustments are made. They do not constitute a statutory financial statement. Positive News co-owners are welcome to view audited accounts upon request.

“Highly recommended
as a gift idea.
This is sunshine in
magazine form”

Mel, gift buyer



Uplift family and friends, with a whole year of Positive News.
Each gift subscription includes four beautifully designed
and certified carbon neutral magazines.

Plus, you'll get an instant download of a gift certificate to forward or print.

Save 10%* with code **SUNSHINE**. ~~£30~~ £27 (UK)
www.positive.news/gift

*Expires 31/10/24. Cannot be used in conjunction with other offers. Discount applies to a one-year gift subscription and does not apply to shipping outside the UK.



I felt like I was drowning in negativity. Positive News has lifted my spirits and given me a renewed hope for humanity and our shared future. I'm so glad to have found your magazine and I've immediately subscribed.

— Sharon C, subscriber

