



Jungle
valley

2025 Case Study





What is the Green Game Jam?

The Green Game Jam is an annual challenge for studios who work on live games with existing audiences. Studios build into their games new content that engages players on environmental topics whilst working towards a collective goal that helps restore and protect our planet.

The project is run by Playing for the Planet, a membership organisation facilitated by the United Nations Environment Programme. Playing for the Planet's mission is to activate players globally to protect and restore our planet whilst accelerating decarbonisation across the video games industry.

2025 Theme & Goal

The 2025 theme for the Green Game Jam was 'All in for Nature'. We challenged studios to engage their players on the amazing power of the natural world whilst fundraising for conservation efforts. At the same time, we invited players to join a global movement of gamers who care about nature by leaving a message on our dedicated pledge page. Because gamers understand the power of teamwork, strategy, and taking bold action.

Why 'All in for Nature'?

Nature is where people feel climate change the most - in more frequent and extreme weather, rising temperatures, or in spotting less wildlife. In addition to these aspects, one third of climate change mitigation strategies depend on the natural world. And last but not least, nature is non-contentious; across the spectrum of opinion, people care about nature. We thought it would be the most effective way to win people's hearts and minds.



Without nature there's no world to explore, no adventures to be had, no food on our plates or clean water to drink. We're not separate from nature, we are part of it, and we depend on it. And right now, nature needs protection.

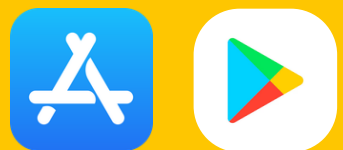


Gameplay

Longleaf Valley is a merge-2 game in which players restore a damaged natural landscape. Merging unlocks new decorations, rewards and a compelling storyline that uncovers the corporate crimes behind the park's destruction.

What makes Longleaf Valley unique is that in-game actions are already tied to real-world reforestation. As players progress through the gameplay and story, they earn tree tokens. Once they earn enough tokens they can plant a real tree! So far, the game has planted almost 3 million trees through their reforestation partners.

Platforms



Background

with Laura Carter, CEO & Founder at TreesPlease games

I've spent 20 years in the games industry, working across production, product and leadership at companies including NaturalMotion, Square Enix, ustwo Games, Disney and PlayStation. But alongside my career, I've always been driven by something far bigger than games.

From a very young age I felt a strong connection to animals and nature. I became vegetarian as a toddler after learning where meat came from, and I still remember reading a book as a child where I learned a fact that hit hard and has stayed with me since - that every minute, a football pitch-sized area of rainforest was being destroyed (over 500k football pitches a year!). This blew my mind and the environmentalist in me was born. From then on I began fundraising, campaigning, with that instinct staying with me throughout my life, evolving into years of campaigning and activism across environmental, animal welfare and humanitarian causes.

Over time, I started to question whether I was having a big enough impact. I was leading on a top grossing game with over 100 million downloads, and it became clear that the real opportunity to make positive impact wasn't outside of games, it was within them. Games reach millions of people every day. They shape habits, behaviours and culture at scale. That felt like a far more powerful lever for change

than anything I could do through separate activism or campaigning.

TreesPlease Games came from that realisation: the belief that games can do more than entertain, they can mobilise millions of players to be impactful simply by playing.

I started TreesPlease in Sep 2019 with the mission to build games that turn intention into action, engaging huge audiences in protecting nature, people and planet. Our first title, Longleaf Valley, is a free-to-play game where players restore nature, bringing wildlife back to life. As players progress, their actions contribute to real-world outcomes, from tree planting to removing hundreds of miles of discarded fishing nets. So far, our community has helped plant over 2.8 million trees.

A common assumption is that games like ours are preaching to the choir, reaching only people who already care deeply about these issues. In reality, the opposite is true. If we only targeted environmentally minded audiences, our reach would be small. Our games are designed for a mass-market, casual audience, people who are there first and foremost for fun, relaxation and escape. That's the challenge and the opportunity: to create experiences that are accessible,



engaging and non-preachy, while still carrying real meaning. A big inspiration for me is WALL-E, which reached a global audience with a powerful message without ever feeling heavy-handed.

At its core, this is about more than impact metrics. Real change happens when those with a voice speak out for the voiceless. Whether it's climate change, animal welfare or humanitarian crises in Gaza, Sudan and Afghanistan, progress depends on reaching wider audiences and bringing topics into view and shifting public opinion. Games give us a way to do that, to bring these issues into everyday life, to build empathy, and to make positive action something people engage with not once, but every day, creating meaningful, lasting behaviour change.



Campaign Overview

Leveraging Longleaf Valley's existing play-for-impact mechanic, bringing a fresh new story to players for a real-world cause

The Campaign

Despite a tight schedule, the small team behind Longleaf Valley introduced a new in-game event inspired by Sea Shepherd and their work protecting our oceans.

Through the event, players support Sea Shepherd directly, with contributions that grow as they progress.

Players follow the journey of the Sea Shepherd crew as they battle one of the ocean's deadliest threats: ghost nets - near invisible, abandoned fishing nets that entangle and endanger marine life. It offers a window into the urgent challenges facing our oceans and the courageous missions undertaken to protect them.

And the best part? Players are part of it. Their progress drives real-world impact, helping protect the seas from an often overlooked threat.



Welcome Gift

The team wanted as many players as possible to join in with the activation, even though it was only unlocked at Level 8. So, for the duration of the event new players received a free welcome gift at Level 5 which boosted their early game progress and signposted the unlockable new content.



Narrative Collab

Educational and entertaining original storyline written with Rewriting Earth, a climate communication agency,

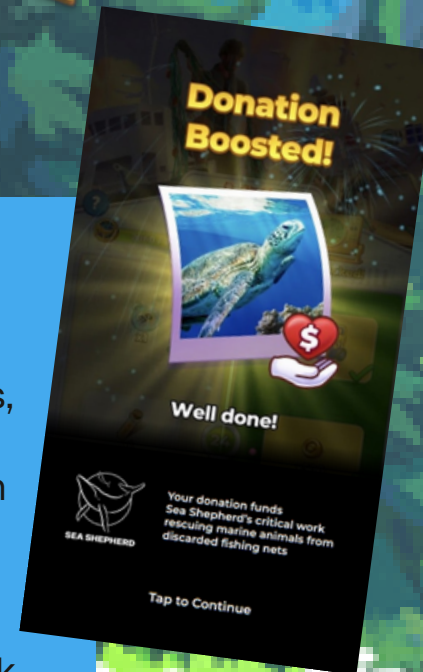


Consistent Theme

Keeping the collaboration going by theming another major feature launch of Q2-25 around the Ghost Net campaign.



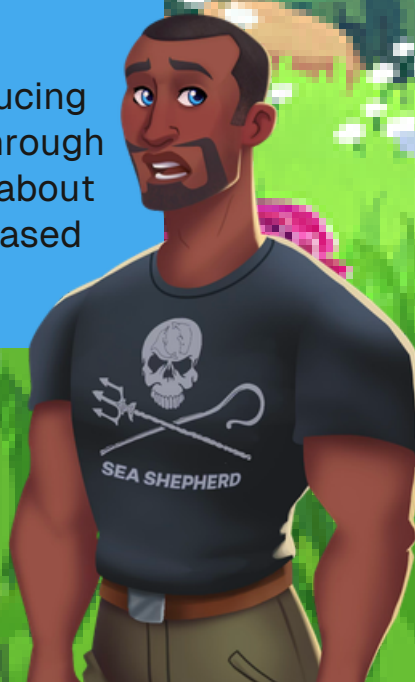
Player Journey



1 Introduction

A new in-game event becomes available to players from Level 8, taking around 60 minutes of playtime to complete.

A new story begins, introducing the Sea Shepherd crew. Through this journey, players learn about the impact of ghost nets based on real-world missions.



2 Gameplay

Players complete objectives to earn Sea Shepherd tokens, which unlock in-game rewards, Ocean conservation themed story content and donations to Sea Shepherd.

As they progress, they unlock new gameplay moments and deepen their connection to the mission.

3 Companion Event

Alongside the main experience, players explore additional content inspired by Sea Shepherd's work tackling ghost nets.

They:

- free trapped marine life
- discover new species
- unlock rewards through play

All while building awareness of bycatch and ocean conservation challenges.

4 Conclusion

Players are directed to the “All in for Nature” campaign page at the event's end to share their voice in support of nature.

Their progress contributes to real-world outcomes, helping protect marine life from one of the ocean's most dangerous hidden threats.





Players want to see the difference they've made, whether that's area protected or trees planted. When players see real-world outcomes it builds trust, loyalty and retention.

The Outcomes

Achieving both real-world impact and strong product performance – a win-win for planet and players

Not only did Longleaf Valley manage to fundraise to remove illegal fishing traps and discarded fishing lines from oceans, they also saw strong player sentiment and increased CTR and conversion on their adverts for the event.

Business KPIs

14%

higher monetisation performance vs comparable events

15%

higher engagement rate vs comparable events

25%

lift in CTR on UA creative

50%

increase in acquisitions during featuring period



included in editorials on the App Store and Play Store

Environmental Impact

863

illegal fishing traps removed

50 miles

of discarded fishing lines removed, protecting seals, mantra rays & sea turtles

Awards Success



Images from Sea Shepherd Conservation Society



Development Process

with Shringi Kumari, Game Director at TreesPlease Games

What was the goal for this activation?

Longleaf Valley already drives real-world impact through player participation, so we wanted to build on our win-win model: delivering great gameplay for players, meaningful impact for planet and nature, and strong product performance.

For this activation, our goal was to shine a light on an issue that plays a major role in ecosystem destruction and carbon impact - overfishing, and its consequences such as ghost nets and bycatch

We chose this theme because it's both critically important and often overlooked. Its high-action, adventurous nature also gave us a powerful way to draw players into a complex environmental issue, making it engaging and accessible. Our aim was to wrap a serious message in a compelling story that players genuinely wanted to take part in.

What challenges did you face?

As a small team, undertaking such an ambitious mission was a monumental effort. We also had to learn to work in sync with a dynamic third-party partner Sea Shepherd whose priorities, rightly, are out on the ocean.

But rather than a blocker, this reality added a layer of authenticity to the project. The result was not just a game feature, but a fully-realized narrative event.

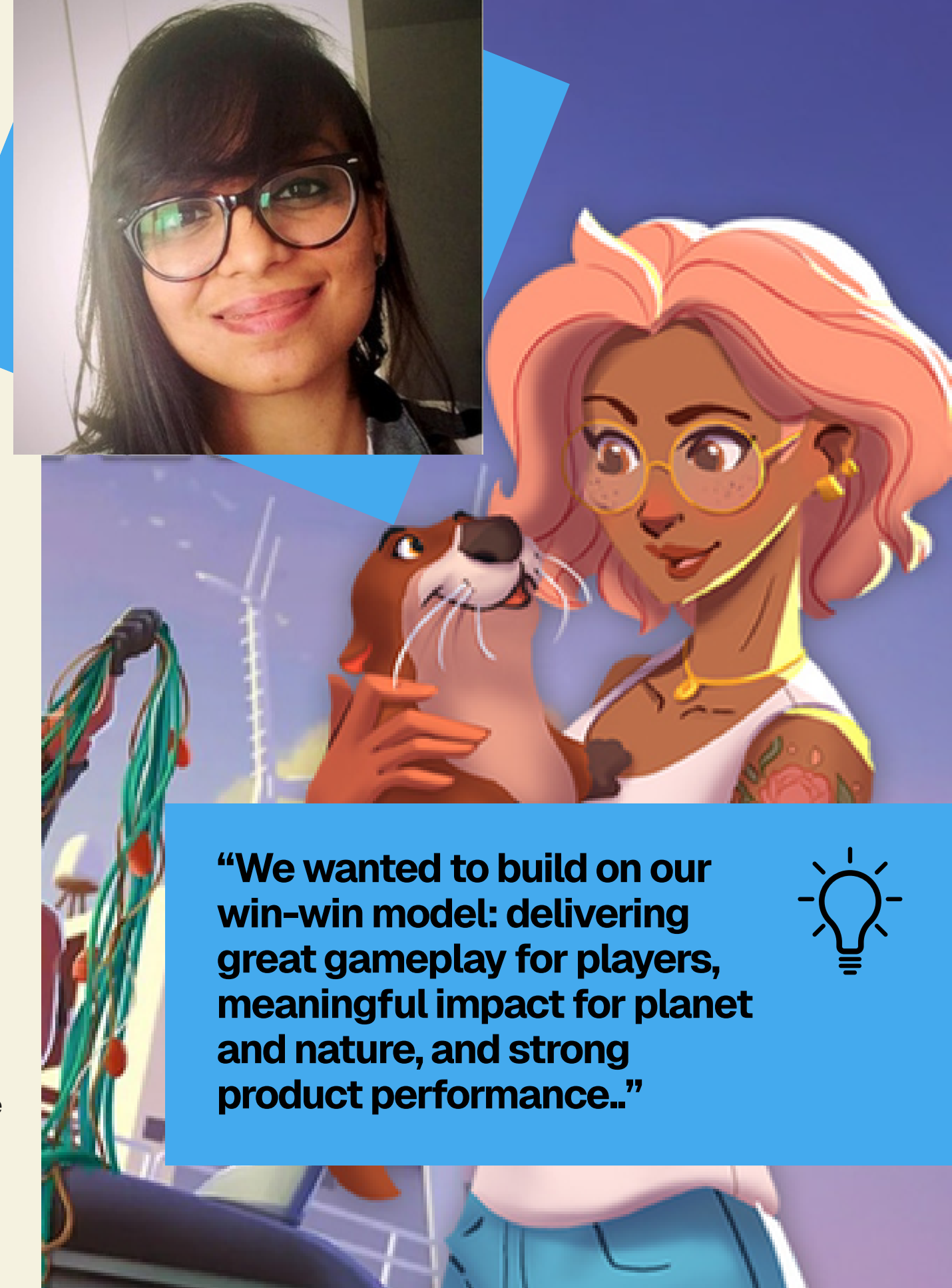
We kept things simple by keeping much of the gameplay loop the same, framed by a new story. Every additional tap or request outside the core play loop can introduce friction and reduce participation. Building within existing systems is also significantly more cost-efficient, which can make it much easier for teams to secure stakeholder buy-in for mission-driven roadmap initiatives.

We also used the ocean theme to debut a new event type available to all players. Since the ocean theme was a departure from what players usually expect in Longleaf Valley, it gave us a useful opportunity to introduce this new mechanic too by tying the change to our wider activities with Ocean Conservation.

What will you do differently next time?

We're pleased with how the activation performed - the focus now is on applying that systematically and scaling this approach across future events and products at a vastly higher scale, to deliver even greater impact.

Part of this will be refining the story elements and improving the pricing model. There was a lot we were trying to achieve - raising awareness about the impact of fishing, creating drama and tension to drive engagement, and structuring it into clear, unlockable moments that fit naturally into player progression. We'd like to streamline this in future iterations to prioritise player engagement and leaner execution.



“We wanted to build on our win-win model: delivering great gameplay for players, meaningful impact for planet and nature, and strong product performance..”



The Learnings



1 The importance of narrative

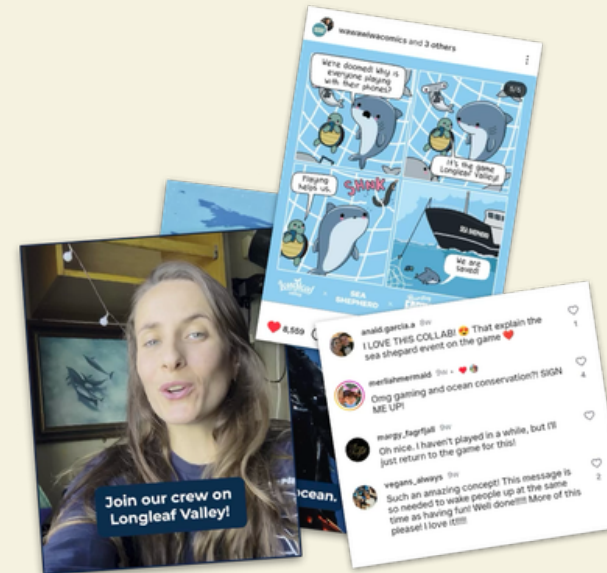
The team recommends using a 3rd person narrative for environmental messaging to avoid the player feeling lectured. Instead of directly telling the player what to do, the activation shows the players how the characters learn and change – in turn helping them to make their own decisions towards positive change.



2 Keep the focus in the game

The team avoided out of game actions, to keep the event part of the game's world.

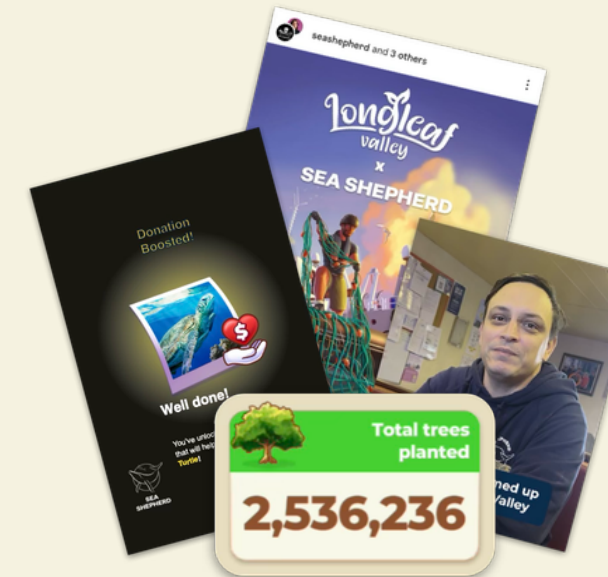
Every extra tap or request outside the usual play loop could add friction and reduce participation, so mechanics were kept simple. This also makes dev effort more cost efficient.



3 One activation, many touchpoints

That being said, Longleaf Valley did employ some additional touchpoints. The external presence was as much about bringing new audiences in as enriching the experience for current players — and giving any skeptics that extra proof of Sea Shepherd's real endorsement:

- Content on socials & @SeaShepherd socials
- Ads featuring Sea Shepherd crew-members
- A comic from an instagram creator to celebrate the launch



4 Show the real-world outcomes

Make the impact visible

The team knew their players want to see the difference they've made. Animals saved, CO2 saved, trees planted etc.

Make the impact credible

They also knew from their experience in this field to partner with trusted NGOs and share visible proof of the impact.



5 Choose the right partner

Make it authentic

The team advise to find a partner or cause that makes sense with your game's world and brand. They're also more likely to want to work with you!

Go with an organisation that meets your business needs

The team worked with a mid-sized NGO who were able to move quickly and collaboratively providing quotes, updates, and assets for media and PR.

So, why join the Green Game Jam?

1 A chance to try new things out

Longleaf Valley, already well-versed in charity partnerships, explored a new terrain by teaming up with Sea Shepherd; and debuted a brand new event type under the same theme. Their players are already primed to support environmental impact due to the nature of the game. However, the uplift in engagement and ad CTR suggests the need to keep things fresh – keep doing more, going further.

2 Have your work celebrated by platform partners

Longleaf Valley was featured by the Google Play and Apple App Store, and their activation also won two prestigious Green Game Jam Awards.

3 Build a foundation

The small team were extremely proud of themselves for pulling off an activation of this scale and quality, and now have a solid foundation from which to scale, maximising their business and impact potential.

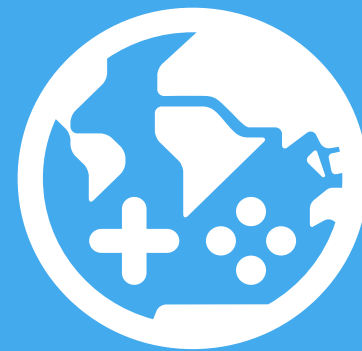
4 Build a stronger connection with your players

Promising outcomes and delivering on them helps to build trust with your players. Building trust, and a core sense of community values can be the secret sauce to convert casuals into loyal fans.

5 Make an impact for nature!

At the end of the day, the purpose of this campaign was to educate, fundraise and make a positive impact for nature and it was successful – Longleaf Valley were able to bring attention to an often ignored issue whilst making content players love.





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