

# Why the Name Broadleaf

*The bamboo metaphor, and how we think about helping build businesses that last*

People sometimes ask us why we're called *Broadleaf*. They're usually expecting a branding story, something clever, something marketable. The truth is simpler than that, and more important. The name comes from bamboo. Broadleaf is a type of bamboo.

## Bamboo looks fragile. It isn't.

If you've ever seen bamboo in a storm, you'll notice something strange. It doesn't fight the wind. It bends, moves, and survives. Bamboo doesn't grow by trying to be the strongest thing above ground. It grows by investing heavily below it. For years, sometimes many years, it builds its root system before anything much happens on the surface. And then, when the roots are ready, it grows fast. Sometimes unbelievably fast.

That's always stuck with us. Because it's the opposite of how most businesses are encouraged to behave.

### Invest below the surface

Build foundations before scaling.  
The root system must come first.

### Flexibility is strength

Bamboo survives by bending.  
Rigidity is fragile. Adaptability is a feature, not a flaw.

### Optimise for longevity

Growing tall is optional. Growing deep is not. Every lasting business needs depth.

## The pressure to look successful early

In professional services, there's enormous pressure to look like you've "made it", growth graphs, headcount, market share, external validation. But businesses that prioritise appearance over foundations eventually pay for it:

- They grow faster than their culture
- They scale before they're aligned
- They add complexity before they have clarity

And when pressure comes, regulation, succession, a key person leaving, the cracks appear.

*"Succession thinking, real succession thinking, is root work. It's done early, quietly, and without urgency. Bamboo doesn't wait until the storm to decide whether its roots are deep enough."*

## What roots really are

When we talk about roots, we're not talking about systems or technology first. We're talking about things that are harder to measure, but far more important:

- Clear ownership thinking
- Trust between people
- Decision rights that are understood, not assumed
- A culture that exists even when the founders aren't in the room
- A shared sense of why the business exists, not just how it makes money

These things don't show up neatly in a P&L. But they determine whether the P&L will still exist in ten years.

## Growing tall is optional. Growing deep isn't.

Not every business needs to be big. But every business that wants to last needs depth. Depth of thinking, depth of trust, depth of ownership. Broadleaf is a connected system of independent businesses, rooted in shared values, long-term thinking, and mutual responsibility. Not a machine. Not a roll-up. Not a brand to dominate. But a network built to last.