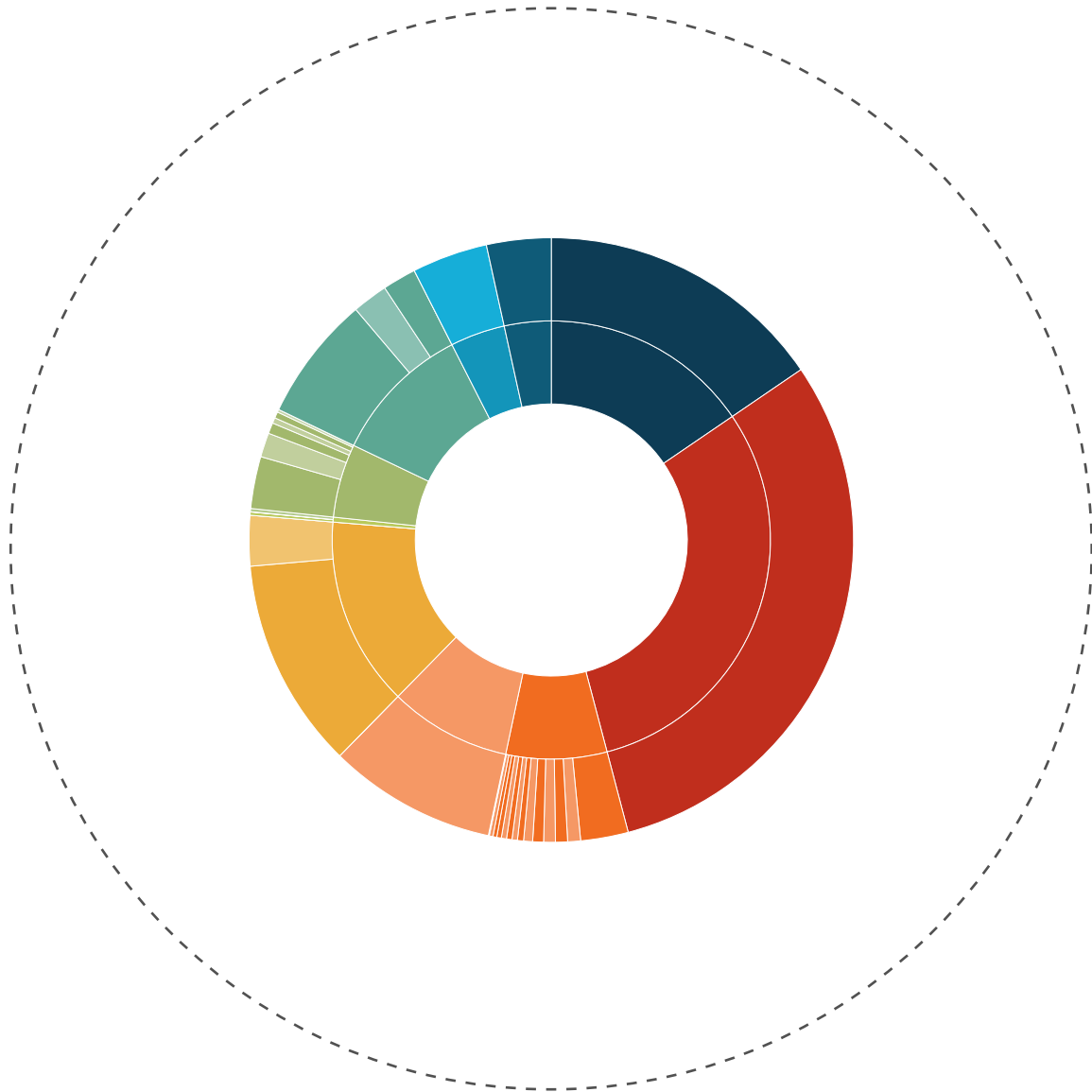


# GRI Sustainability Report / 2021



**BENNETTS  
ASSOCIATES**

**“Bennetts Associates is an example of integration of sustainability and climate action in business, through their commitment to set a science-based target, procure sustainable energy, and include sustainability considerations in their designs. Their work contributes to moving us closer, faster to global climate neutrality.”**  
UNFCC

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# Strategy Statement

This is Bennetts Associates' tenth annual Sustainability Report aligned with Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) guidelines. Whilst we had monitored our business impacts over a number of years previously, we began to publicly record our performance in this format from 2012.

Bennetts Associates is widely recognised as one of the UK's leading exponents of sustainable design, with a lengthy track record of completed buildings, innovation and research. Much of this work has been generated through a series of pioneering office buildings. The practical lessons of these architecturally and commercially successful projects have since been applied to a wide range of building types, from theatres to visitor centres, industrial facilities, university departments and masterplans.

Having designed some of the country's most significant sustainable buildings, Bennetts Associates has also recognised for some time that the re-use and refurbishment of the existing buildings stock is as crucial as exemplary new buildings. The majority of buildings that will be in use in 2050 are already built, many of which are coming to the end of their useful lives. Legislation and fiscal incentives (such as the Carbon Reduction Commitments) are increasingly directed at the existing stock as much as new buildings. Equally, as the operational energy use of buildings is reduced then the embodied impact, the emissions related to the construction of buildings, becomes yet more significant. Consequently, for environmental, economic and often aesthetic reasons there is an imperative to begin looking at the existing building stock.

Through several built and planned projects, Bennetts Associates has already tackled many of the differing conditions and challenges associated with sustainable re-use. This has ranged from the reworking of a series of historic buildings in central London for the practice's own occupation, to the transformation of Hampshire County Council's 1960s Elizabeth II Court into one of the lowest energy offices in the country. The latter is already seen by many as a benchmark for creative and sustainable re-use. The experience gained on such projects is now being applied to a series of projects that are engaging with lighter intervention in 1960s buildings and with the re-use of lightweight 1980s business parks.

Five Pancras Square in King's Cross, for the London Borough of Camden, has one of the highest BREEAM ratings in the world, at 97.6%. This building has been the subject of extensive post-occupancy analysis during 2016, in particular space utilisation. Our Sports Hall and 11-21 Canal Reach projects for Argent have demonstrated low carbon design and measurement best-practice, and Timber Square, for Landsec looks to build on this with a design aligned to the UKGBC's Net-Zero Buildings framework.

2021 was an important year for our contributions to external organisations, with important work being done with the UK-Green Building Council around the cost and value of net-zero and our work supporting LETI embodied carbon work.

# About This Report

— 102-14

This report covers the full period from 1<sup>st</sup> January to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021 and relates to activities for our headquarters in London and offices in Edinburgh and Manchester, following on from our 2020 report. Due to its size and the fact it is not within our operational control, the Manchester office is currently reported as dependent to the London office, and so there are some areas where these operations are excluded. This exclusion is highlighted where relevant. No other entities are included in the organisation's financial statements. Over the reporting period Bennetts Associates has operated solely in the United Kingdom. This period did include architectural services for projects in Greece and India however there were no business operations or travel undertaken abroad as part of these projects.

Bennetts Associates reports annually using the Global Reporting Initiative format, which provides a transparent and comparable framework for sustainability reports. This is our tenth report, issued annually. This report has been prepared in accordance with the GRI Standards: Core option.

Since our 2018 report we have been reporting on our 20:22 sustainability targets, which form our sustainability strategy for the period of our science-based targets on a variety of themes from climate change to community engagement. In 2019 we also received approval for our revised science-based targets, which are now aligned to a 1.5-degree scenario and are reported against in this document.

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# About Us

## About Bennetts Associates

Bennetts Associates is one of the UK's leading architectural practices, with a reputation for design and delivery across a wide range of areas within the Built Environment sector. We provide architectural services to clients on projects within the UK and Europe and are recognised as a pioneer of sustainability. With a wide range of completed projects, published papers and research that demonstrates how good design is compatible with high levels of economic, social and environmental performance.

We support the precautionary principle introduced by the UN Rio Declaration on Environment and Development and as a company also support lobbying for policy supporting climate change commitments. We are founding members of the UK-Green Building Council, are members of the UNFCCC Race to Zero campaign and have co-signed letters to the government on key issues. — 102-11

## At a glance

Total number of operations: 3 (offices in London, Edinburgh and Manchester) — 102-7

Turnover: £6,625,680 (financial year to 31st May 2021)

Capitalisation: £1,966,084

Debt: None

Total services provided: 1 (architectural design) — 102-2

Number of employees: 71 FTE (as of 10th January 2021)

## Governance

We are a private limited company owned by an Employee Ownership Trust. The board of trustees is made up of employees from all levels of the company, and one external representative. The company has no joint ventures, subsidiaries or outsourced operations. — 102-5

As under the previous ownership structure, the practice is managed by the Directors and Associate Directors. The Directors chair the management team (all directors and associate directors) on a rotating basis. — 102-18

Issues of sustainability are managed on a day-to-day basis by the Sustainability working group and Quality Management group which are made up of architectural and administrative staff from within the practice. Their role is to ensure that management of environmental and social impacts are integrated into our everyday working practices, primarily through the Environmental Management System (EMS). Both groups meet monthly and report back to the Management Team on a quarterly basis, where the ongoing effectiveness of the EMS and its implementation is evaluated and any necessary adjustments are proposed.

The practice's ISO 14001 EMS forms the basis for management of the majority of material topics. This is reviewed and certified by Lloyds' Register. — 102-56

## Values and standards

As an RIBA-chartered architectural practice with all qualified technical staff accredited by the ARB, Bennetts Associates conforms to Standard 3 'Honest promotion of services' of the ARB Standards of Conduct and Practice. There have been no complaints received during the reporting period, substantiated or otherwise, covering breaches of customer privacy. — 418-1

The organisation's values and principles are publicly available on the 'Studio' section of our website ([www.bennettsassociates.com/practice](http://www.bennettsassociates.com/practice)). — 102-16

As a 'Gold Leaf' member of the UK-GBC we have also signed a commitment to the following:

- We commit to championing UK-GBC's vision by integrating sustainability into our business operations.
- We will demonstrate our commitment by leading and advocating practices that are environmentally responsible, ethical and fair.
- We will be open and transparent about our progress and share best practice with others.

# Target Performance at a Glance

Following implementation of our 20:22 Targets we are reporting on progress against these annually. The below table gives an indication of our success in achieving these targets.

Some targets are annual, and some have specific end dates (illustrated by grey blocks up to the year where the target is due to be complete). Green targets have been completed fully, and amber targets are those which have been completed partially, requiring more work. The following pages go into more detail about our progress against these targets.

Target	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
B1.1 Energy Usage (26% reduction by 2022)					Green
B1.2 Energy Usage (Review target against 1.5 degree scenario)					Green
B2.1 Renewables (Continue to Procure 100% renewables)					Green
B3.1 Business Travel (26% reduction by 2022)					Green
B4 Carbon Neutral (offset all market based emissions)					Green
B5 Industry Action (Continue funding of UKGBC/ISEP etc.)					Green
B6 Plastic Use (Single Use Plastic Free by 2022)					Green
D7 Ambition (Kick-off meetings)					Green
D8 Briefing (All projects to advocate performance targets)					Green
D9 Materials (Develop practice wide toolkit for materials)					Green
D10 Analysis (All projects by 2022 to have LCA studies)					Green
D11 All Projects to include sustainability data in reports/spec					Green
D12 POE (undertake at least one POE per year)					Green
P13 Staff Footprints (60% completion rate on staff survey)					Green
P14 Staff Energy (Continue big-clean switch campaign)					Green
P15 Fair Pay (pay living wage/London living wage)					Green
P16 Community (raise funds for at least one project per year)					Green
P17 Physical Wellbeing (measure comfort within our offices)					Green
P18 Mental Wellbeing (training and policies by end of 2019)					Green
P19 Opportunities (work experience placements)					Green
P20 Mentoring (involvement in mentoring programmes)					Green

## B1: Energy Usage

We commit to reducing energy-related GHG emissions by at least 26% before 2022 from a 2016 baseline year.

This is the first of our two approved science-based targets. Although all the energy we buy is from renewable sources, we still recognise that reducing demand is an important part of sustainable leadership.

In 2021 we reported a 57% reduction in emissions from this scope, meaning that this target has already been achieved and just needs to be maintained in preparation for our next target period.

## B2: Clean Energy

We will continue to procure all energy from 100% renewable sources.

Our Edinburgh and Manchester studios only used 100% renewable electricity (and no gas) during 2021. London used 100% renewable electricity but is still using gas. We were contracted to a company to supply 100% green gas, but the company was sold to a company with no green gas tariff. This target will remain amber until our next switch date in 2023.

## B3: Business Travel

We commit to reducing business travel emissions (Scope 3.6) by 26% before 2022 from a 2016 baseline.

This is the second of our two approved science-based targets. The emissions within this category and the opportunities for reduction are primarily related to flights. Since the targets were drafted, we have worked hard to reduce unnecessary flights by installing stringent policies. The travel reductions of 2020 were maintained in 2021 and we are still showing reductions of 95% from our baseline year, thus continuing to meet our target early.

## B4: Carbon Neutral

We commit to continue offsetting the entirety of our market-based GHG footprint in line with our commitment to the UN scheme Climate Neutral Now.

In 2021 we increased our internal carbon price to approximately £160/tonne and used funds to offset 50% of our market-based footprint (excluding project emissions) and purchase removals for the remainder.

## B5: Industry Action

We commit to continue funding cross-industry research and lobbying in the field of sustainability, with a focus on climate change through to 2022.

This will primarily be via the continued funding of the UK Green Building Council as a Gold Leaf member, which has continued during this year alongside support of other partner organisations focusing on sustainability such as the Islington Sustainable Energy Partnership (ISEP), the London Energy Transformation Initiative (LETI) and the Get It Right Initiative (GIRI).

## B6: Plastic-Free

We will work towards being a 'single use plastic'-free office by 2022 and set policies that work towards incorporating the circular economy within our office practices.

Our studios are already focused on reducing waste with washable glasses, mugs, plates and cutlery for food use. Our Edinburgh office has done some work around this, but the policy and outcomes remain incomplete.

## D7: Ambition

All projects since 2018 establish key areas of improvement with the in-house sustainability team from the onset of the design.

The intention of these reviews is to provide a forum to share best practice and lessons learned at the very beginning of a project and produce ambitious targets for all projects. These reviews have been undertaken on several projects, but we have yet to achieve 100% coverage (we are closer to 80%). This target will remain amber until we have 100% coverage and will be audited via our ISO 14001 EMS.

## D8: Briefing

Since 2018, strategic conversations are undertaken with clients on all projects with a view to incorporate key sustainability issues within consultant appointments.

We believe that, as we are often involved from the beginning of a project, one of our biggest opportunities to create more sustainable projects is to work with the client to create a project environment that gets the most out of a project. During 2021 we have become far more successful in introducing sustainability targets and requirements into our brief, capturing in around 80% of early-stage projects, but we will consider this an amber issue until it reaches 100%.

## D9: Materials

We will consider the ethical and environmental implications of the materials that we specify, including their impact on internal air quality.

During 2020 we co-authored the LETI embodied carbon primer for architects, which is now also being used in-house. We have since done a large amount of work around the elemental assessment of typical build-ups and circular economy research. We therefore consider this target complete.

## D10: Analysis

By 2022 some form of embodied carbon analysis will be undertaken on all projects; for the majority of them this analysis will be made for their key components of superstructure, substructure and façade.

During 2021 we measured the embodied carbon on several of our largest projects, in line with the RICS Professional Statement. We also committed to report project emissions as part of our scope 3 emissions, and we give an indication of the level of assessment across projects later in this document.

## D11: Tracking

All projects from 2018 will include standardised key sustainability data within their RIBA Stage 2 and 3 reports, and any subsequent specifications.

This has been a difficult target to achieve given the variety of project scales and typologies. We are now planning to publish key sustainability data for all projects on our website from Stage 4, but this is at too early a stage to report on so we are showing this as an amber for 2021.

## D12: POE

We will undertake Post-Occupancy Evaluations on at least one project per year.

We have undertaken Post-Occupancy Evaluations on a number of projects over the history of the practice and were involved in the development of the Soft Landings framework. In the past, it has been difficult to get clients to commit to externally provided POEs. In 2017, we became a partner of the Building Use Studies Methodology, meaning that we could offer industry-standard POE without having to fund external consultants. In 2021 we were unable to access buildings for POE due to the pandemic but have plans for visits in 2022.

## P13: Staff Footprints

We will continue to help staff produce personal carbon footprints and provide recommendations on how they can reduce them. We will target a completion rate of at least 60% for the exercise.

In 2015, we wanted to help our staff understand their full footprint, from energy to food and transport. We developed a simple tool to measure personal carbon footprints, and have been successfully running the exercise ever since. We started sharing this tool with other organisations in 2016, and since then have incrementally increased the number of responses per year. As part of this commitment, we will continue to make the tool freely available and it has been used widely by a large number of organisations. In 2021 we achieved an average response rate of 62% across the three studios.

## P14: Staff Energy

We will continue to assist staff in switching their own energy to 100% renewable sources.

Aiming to help our staff reduce their footprints, we negotiated a deal with a 100% renewable energy supplier in 2016 and ran a switching campaign. During 2018 we joined up with Big Clean Switch to run annual switching campaigns, which also raise funds for community projects in the area around our London studio in Islington.

## P15: Fair Pay

We will continue to pay all staff the Living Wage (London Living Wage within London) as a minimum, and continually assess pay against industry benchmarks.

This was achieved for all our employees in 2021.

## P16: Community

We will continue to support or raise funds for at least one community project every year.

Whilst fundraising was undertaken in 2021, no specific community project was supported. This is something we will look to develop policies for.

## P17: Physical Wellbeing

We actively measure conditions that relate to physical wellbeing across our studios and seek to improve our workplace environment.

Since 2015 we have been researching how best to measure air quality, investing in a range of sensors and discussing best practice with consultants. This is something that we will continue to develop. In 2018 we installed a series of sensors across the office which measure Temperature, Humidity, VOCs, CO2 and PM2.5 pollution. During 2021 we installed even more sensors within the office to allow live monitoring of CO2 as a proxy for ventilation to support safe reoccupation of our premises.

## P18: Mental Wellbeing

We have created a group dedicated to improving mental health and wellbeing within the practice. This group will provide annual training on mental health and wellbeing for all staff, and will create policies that can be implemented across the practice by the end of 2019.

During 2019 the group set up several specific training sessions, supported by external experts in mental health and wellbeing. Free support was communicated to staff, and wellbeing walks with a new office dog were arranged, and this has been built on during 2021 with virtual wellbeing sessions and events.

## P19: Opportunities

Since 2018, we provide at least two work experience placements per year to students, either from local schools or via Blueprint for All. These types of placements will make up at least half of all work experience placements that we provide.

During 2021 we offered several placements to local students and met this target.

## P20: Mentoring

We will continue to be involved in the mentoring of students via schemes such as RIBA mentoring or Blueprint for All.

During 2021 we continued to mentor students through Blueprint for All (formerly the Stephen Lawrence Trust), RIBA regional schemes, the University of East London (UEL), Arts Emergency, and Camden STEAM which focusses on school-age children in the vicinity of the London studio.



— Our indoor Awair meters measure temperature, VOCs, CO2 and PM2.5s since 2018



— Our 3D printers use bio-plastics that are recycled into new 3D printing material



# Carbon Footprint

As a practice we believe it is important to measure and reduce our own environmental impact and to show leadership in reducing this impact to sustainable levels. As previously discussed, we see climate change as the key issue of our time, and therefore have focussed most of our efforts on the reduction of GHG emissions, particularly as this is an impact which is most relevant to our industry and clients.

We have been measuring Scope 1 and 2 emissions as defined by the GHG protocol since 2008 and have added Scope 3 emissions to include significant impacts within our supply chain over which we can exercise control. All carbon factors used are from DEFRA 2021 figures unless otherwise stated in the appendices. During 2021 we committed to reporting project emissions under "use of sold products", but this is covered in the next section and reported separately.

Since 2014, in line with GHG protocols, we have been reporting market-based emissions as well as location-based emissions. At the end of 2017 we signed up to the United Nations Climate Neutral Now pledge and offset all our market-based emissions. As of 2020 we have set a minimum carbon price of £80/t in line with the UKGBC renewables and offsets guidance. In 2021 we increased this to approximately £160 and used funds to offset 50% of our market-based footprint (excluding project emissions) and purchase removals for the remainder.

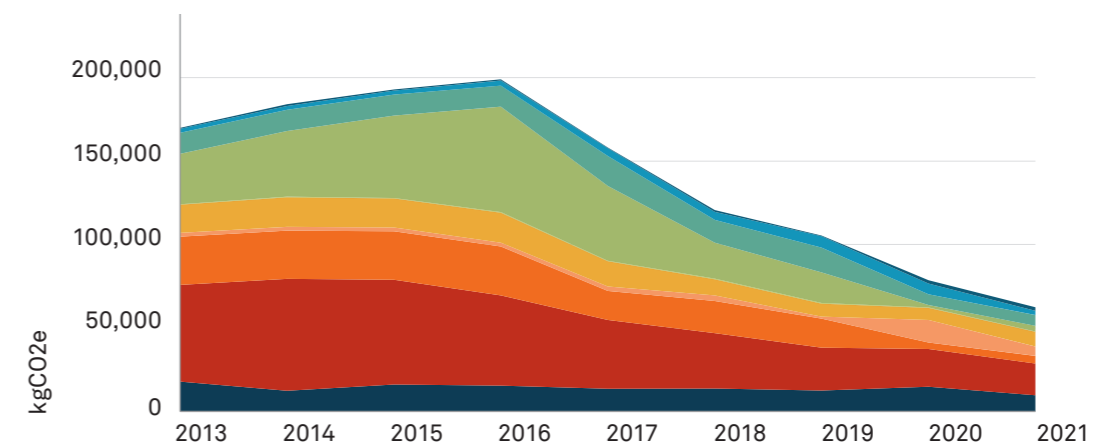
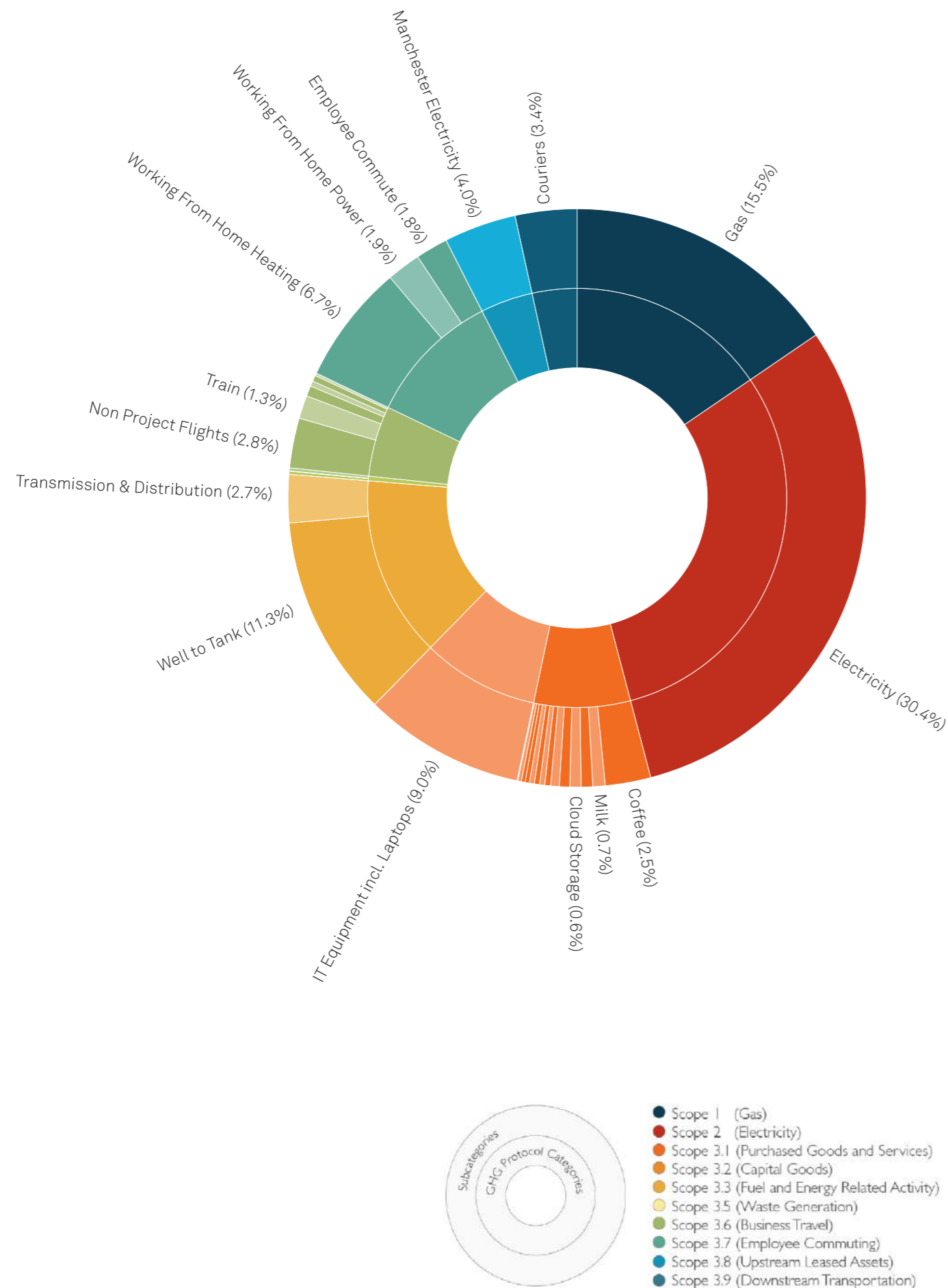
Gold Standard Offsets are viewable via the Gold Standard Impact registry via [order GSM13367](#). The removals, purchased through Supercritical, are for a portfolio comprising: 40% Biochar, 15% Enhanced Weathering, 25% Direct Air Capture, 20% Bio-oil. This constitutes an acceleration of both the quality and quantity of removals compared to our public commitments and UKGBC recommendations.

## Absolute carbon emissions

The total carbon footprint for 2021 is 62,470kgCO<sub>2</sub>e based on Location factors and 42,954kgCO<sub>2</sub>e based on Market factors. Overall, this represents a 21% reduction for location, and a 7% increase for market factors compared to 2020. Although 2021 was more settled than 2020, there was still a large investment in IT infrastructure, and it was our first year with two work-from-home heating periods. The increase in market emissions was due to the enforced move from 100% biogas to a normal gas tariff.

## Carbon intensity figures

As the number of employees increased during 2021, it is important to relate performance to a per person figure. The total practice footprint per person is 880kgCO<sub>2</sub>e based on location factors and 605kgCO<sub>2</sub>e based on market factors. This shows that even using intensity figures we reduced emissions by around 22% based on location factors and increased them by 6% based on market factors, compared to 2020.



Footprint from 2013-2021

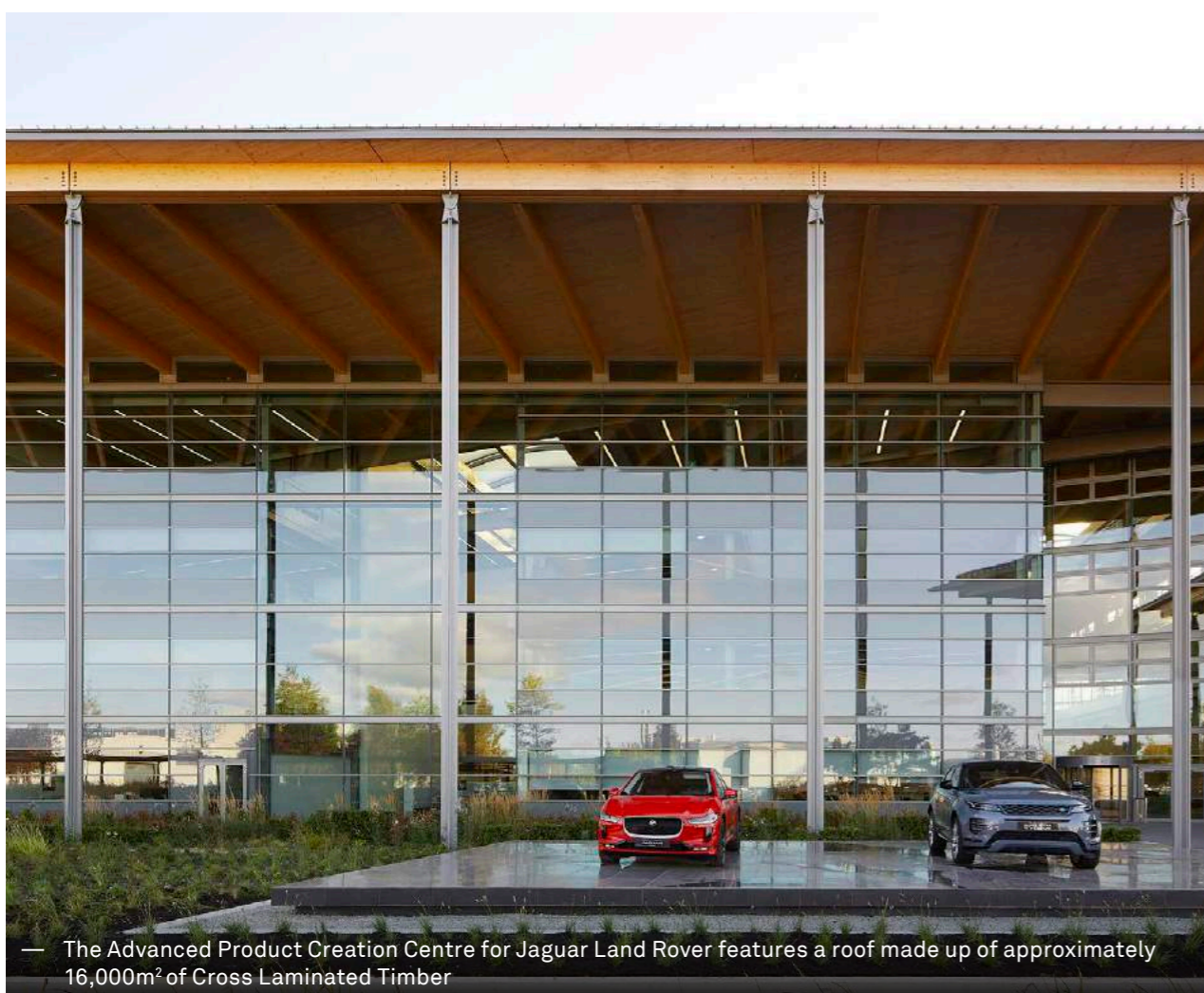
# Topics/Material Boundaries

Continuing from past reports and following the stakeholder engagement discussed in the previous section, the following themes have been identified as key areas within our business that should be reported on. — 102-46

- Economic Context of Sustainable Design — 102-47
- Environmental Management of the Practice
- Environmental Impact of the Practice
- Culture of the Practice
- Client and Community Engagement

The second step in defining the content of this report is the prioritisation of these themes, based on their materiality and boundaries, defined through stakeholder engagement.

The boundaries of the relevant topics have been considered in relation to the material topics that have been identified and prioritised with our stakeholders. When the boundary has been defined as material within the organisation, it applies to the whole organisation (including offices in London Edinburgh and Manchester) with any specific limitation made clear within the related disclosure. These material topics are: — 103-1



— The Advanced Product Creation Centre for Jaguar Land Rover features a roof made up of approximately 16,000m<sup>2</sup> of Cross Laminated Timber

Topic	Boundary	Materiality (including material entities and limitations)
Economic Performance	Outside of the organisation	Risks and opportunities to clients and other entities within the project team of incorporating costs and benefits of sustainable practice (limited to entities with whom Bennetts Associates has regular contact)
Materials	Within and outside	Primarily use of stationery (e.g. paper) within the organisation, use of building materials on construction sites outside (geographical location within the UK, except for limited sourcing of materials from Europe)
Energy	Within and outside	Direct energy consumption of Bennetts Associates' offices, and the energy consumption of the buildings we design that are outwith the organisation – this has a greater impact, and also holds the greatest potential for reduction (material to client and building maintenance contractors, predominantly within the UK). This includes dissemination of best practice and activism to improve the regulatory and business context for our work.
Water	Within and outside	Direct use of water in office environment, and indirect use in the buildings that we design
Emissions	Within the organisation	Indirect emissions due to generation of electricity, business travel, etc.
Effluents and Waste	Within the organisation	Water discharge
Products and Services	Within the organisation	Mitigation of carbon emissions from property
Training and Education	Within the organisation	Skills management and lifelong learning, performance and career development reviews
Diversity and Equal Opportunity	Within the organisation	Monitoring of gender and minority breakdown
Customer Privacy	Within the organisation	Data protection

# Stakeholder Engagement and Feedback

As architects, sustainability impacts both our business activities and the buildings that we design. Low-energy, sustainable design has been central to our design process since the formation of the company, and publicly recording our business impacts forms a vital part of our engagement with both primary and secondary stakeholders.

Our primary stakeholders are those involved in the design process, inclusive of Bennetts Associates' employees, the wider project team and client. However, through the legacy of the buildings that we design and our wider impact as a prominent leader in sustainability in the built environment, we are also accountable to a large group of secondary stakeholders – including building users not originally represented by the client, other professionals, and the wider built environment community.

Employee engagement is carried out through a combination of forums. Weekly office meetings take place, which are an opportunity for project teams to update the rest of the office on the progress of projects and to update the whole office on changes to regulations, standards and working practices. The practice holds six-monthly reviews for all staff. These are used to highlight any training needs or problems. A weekly internal newsletter is issued updating staff on wider practice activities, environmental policy updates from the UKGBC and PR issues. In addition to these, the whole office takes part in regular CPD sessions, and Summer and winter CPD days, where staff are encouraged to present and/or external parties are invited to talk. Project design, sustainability and technical reviews are held regularly to ensure a consistent level of output and to challenge standards. In 2021 this included an all-office Climate Strike day where all staff took part in a co-design exercise to improve how we integrate sustainability into personal, practice and project decision-making.

— 404-3

We have built up a clear overview of our main sustainability impacts over several years. This has been informed in part by our own, mostly project-related, experience and through consultation and engagement with a number of stakeholders and organisations including:

- Internal reviews involving the Sustainability Working Group.
- Recommendations from external consultants on key sustainability issues. Consultations form a continuous part of the design process, and are also incorporated into and formally reviewed at three key stages, as well as in RIBA Stage 1,2,3 and 4 reports. — 102-42
- Reviews of formal project client feedback conducted as part of our QA system. Client feedback is sought at the end of the planning process and again on project completion. Feedback is recorded on client feedback forms and is reported back to the management team at quarterly management meetings. — 102-43
- Feedback is also sought from consultants, contractors, and users on an informal basis. Comments gathered in this way are recorded, filed, and fed back to all staff internally. Any corrective or preventative actions that result from this feedback is recorded on the Continual Improvement Log and reviewed by the Quality Management Group and the Management Team.
- Best practice sustainability research and reports, through our continued involvement with the UKGBC and LETI in particular. Stakeholder engagement has also been undertaken specifically as part of the preparation of this report. — 102-40
- Bennetts Associates' 2020 Sustainability Report was circulated to all staff and to key external stakeholders.



— The University of Edinburgh's Potterrow Department, where we funded a Post-Occupancy Evaluation study for the first phase, which was used to influence the second phase

# Dissemination and Campaigning

One of the key positive impacts we can have as a company, as well as the designs we produce, is in disseminating best practice and reinforcing sustainability as a key theme.

The prominence of the firm's work in this field is undoubtedly enhanced by recognition of its architectural quality through RIBA and other awards. As a result, Bennetts Associates is frequently asked to contribute to conferences, publications and research programmes, which not only helps to disseminate information but also forms a major strand of our promotional activities. Employees of Bennetts Associates are also involved in a number of external groups where they are able to assist in disseminating knowledge to the wider industry.

The following is a list of practice and employee events, advisory roles and memberships.

— 102-12  
— 102-13

## Talks & Events

Scotland's Climate Assembly	Rab Bennetts
Structural Timber Roundtable Talk	Edward Marchand
University of Nottingham Sustainability Week	Ben Hopkins
AJ Summit	Peter Fisher
Ideas to Action	Oliver Boaler
NLA webinar	Peter Fisher
Timber Buildings Talk	Edward Marchand
UKGBC Walking the Walk	Peter Fisher
Net Zero Roundtable	Oliver Boaler
KQ Green Skills Hub	Peter Fisher
World Green Building Week Talks	Jo Dunwell
SpACE Net Zero Event	James Nelmes and Peter Fisher
Theatres Trust Conference	Simon Erridge

## Advisory and Leadership Roles

Knowledge Quarter Net Zero group	Chair, Peter Fisher
Knowledge Quarter	Advisory Board, Nick Humphreys
Usable Buildings Trust	Trustee, Denise Bennetts
Islington Sustainable Energy Partnership	Treasurer, Ben Hopkins
Retrofit for Purpose	Peter Fisher

## Memberships

ABTT	TDAG
ISG	Cockburn Association
London Festival of Architecture	The Knowledge Quarter
ACA	CWCT
Midtown Business Club	The Old Vic Theatre
ArchiFringe	Edinburgh Architectural Association
Museum of Architecture	The Theatres Trust
Article 25	Get It Right TRADA
New London Architecture	Hampstead Theatre
BCI	Turn End Trust
PLEA	Islington Society
BCO	UKGBC
RIAS	Islington Sustainable Energy Partnership
British Library - Architects' Lives	
RIBA	
Building User Study (BUS)	
Sadlers Wells Theatre	
C20 - Twentieth Century Society	
SEDA	
City Property Association	

# Our Approach to Design

As architects, by far our greatest environmental impact is indirect, through the projects that we design rather than through our direct impact as an organisation. A single change in specification on a single project can represent a carbon emission greater than our annual carbon footprint as a practice. Consequently, how we design is of the utmost importance.

The most sustainable buildings are those grounded in human comfort that therefore have less need to consume energy by compensating for discomfort through heating, cooling, ventilating and lighting. What excites us about such buildings is not only their reduced environmental impact, but also that they simply lead to better and more pleasant architecture.

In addition to architectural aspirations, all our projects must show sustainable ambition, with project deliverables that are supported by hard data (such as CO<sub>2</sub> emissions), rather than mere aspiration. For each project an initial kick-off meeting is arranged with the sustainability team who set internal targets and provide guidance on best practice. Following that, the project is reviewed at each stage until it completes. Key factors that are considered are:

## Operational carbon

Measured in terms of energy (kWh/m<sup>2</sup>) to allow fair comparison between buildings, this is largely influenced by the passive design measures that we can incorporate. We also advise clients wherever possible to set targets for operational energy, and to engage consultants to work towards those targets. Both the Building regulations and the leading sustainability certification, BREEAM, are premised on unreliable assumptions, and this has led to an issue referred to as the Performance Gap. However, methodologies such as CIBSE's TM54 and NABERS Design for Performance now allow design teams to make decisions that influence the actual performance of the building.

## Embodied carbon

Embodied emissions are becoming more widely recognised as a key issue within the construction sector. These are the emissions that are caused as a result of the construction (and maintenance and demolition) of buildings. These emissions result in anywhere from a quarter to half of the lifetime emissions for a building, however the fact that they are emitted within such a short time, and are heavily influenced by the architectural specification means that they are a key concern for us.

## Wellbeing

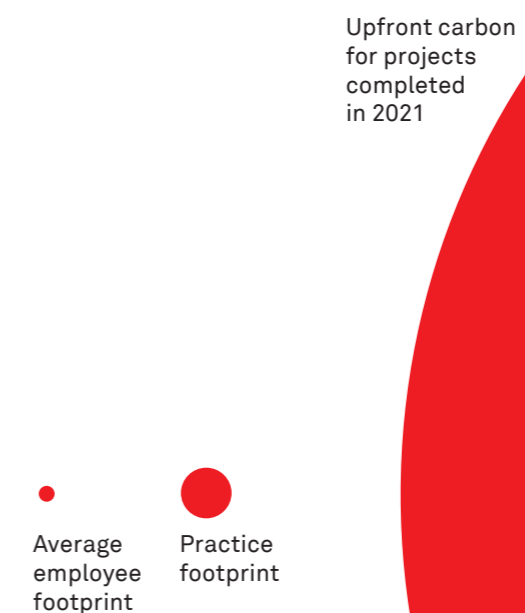
This developing issue is of keen interest to us, as it is directly aligned with the concept of delivering enjoyable and comfortable buildings. We monitor a range of environmental factors in our own studios and have run surveys to understand the users' satisfaction with spaces.

## Scope 3 – Use of Sold Products

During 2022 we committed to reporting against “use of sold products”. Whilst we are still refining how we do this for the 2022 report, we wanted to start as soon as possible, so we are reporting upfront carbon emissions relating to all completed projects in 2021. This was primarily made up of the completion of 11-21 Canal Reach and Woolwich Works as well as

two much smaller projects. 11-21 Canal Reach had a comprehensive as-built RICS aligned carbon assessment, but Woolwich Works did not. For this year, until a better methodology is decided, we are using an “average” figure of 950KgCO<sub>2</sub>e/m<sup>2</sup> for all projects we do not know the upfront carbon of; both to give a conservative estimate and to incentivise us to give specific figures. As the Woolwich Works project is a fairly light touch retrofit project over a vast campus of buildings, this is guaranteed to be a large overestimate. From 2022 we will aim to also include emissions relating to 60 years of energy use for each project.

Based on the 2021 figures, our average intensity for known upfront carbon is 705KgCO<sub>2</sub>e/m<sup>2</sup>, and the total (including industry averages for unknown projects) is 780KgCO<sub>2</sub>e/m<sup>2</sup>. The total known upfront carbon is 39,128tCO<sub>2</sub>e and the total (including industry averages for unknown projects) is 62,531tCO<sub>2</sub>e. This equates to around 881tCO<sub>2</sub>e per staff member (around 1,000 times that of our practice footprint).



— The relative carbon impact of an individual, the business and our projects



The new Norton Motorbikes HQ at Solihull follows the principles of circular economy by using components that will eventually be returned to the events industry

# Our Footprint in More Detail

## Scope 1 (and Associated Scope 3 Emissions)

### Gas (Scope 1)

Absolute Emissions (Location)	9,665kgCO <sub>2</sub> e	(-35%2020), (-46%2013)	— 305-1 — 305-3
Intensity Emissions (Location)	136kgCO <sub>2</sub> e/person	(-36%2020), (-44%2013)	
Absolute Emissions (Market)	9,665kgCO <sub>2</sub> e	(N/A%2020), (-46%2013)	
Intensity Emissions (Market)	136kgCO <sub>2</sub> e/person	(N/A%2020), (-44%2013)	
Absolute Usage (kWh)	52,769kWh	(-18% 2020), (-33% 2013)	— 302-1
Intensity Usage (kWh/person)	743kWh/person	(-35% 2020), (-44% 2013)	

### Associated Scope 3 Emissions

Well to Tank (Location & Market)	1,654kgCO <sub>2</sub> e
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Gas usage is based on space heating requirements within the London office. During 2021, as a consequence of lower occupation during the pandemic, gas usage reduced significantly. Due to our supplier selling accounts to another company our gas moved from 100% green gas to a standard tariff, though our medium-term ambition is to switch to heat pumps for the London studio.

## Scope 2 (and Associated Scope 3 Emissions)

### Electricity (Scope 2)

Absolute Emissions (Location)	19,010kgCO <sub>2</sub> e	(-16%2020), (-67%2013)	— 305-2 — 305-3
Intensity Emissions (Location)	268kgCO <sub>2</sub> e/person	(-17%2020), (-66%2013)	
Absolute Emissions (Market)	0kgCO <sub>2</sub> e	(n/a2020), (-100%2013)	
Intensity Emissions (Market)	0kgCO <sub>2</sub> e/person	(n/a2020), (-100%2013)	
Absolute Usage (kWh)	89,531kWh	(-8%2020), (-31%2013)	
Intensity Usage (kWh/person)	1,261kWh/person	(-9%2020), (-29%2013)	

### Associated Scope 3 Emissions

Well to Tank (Location & Market)	5,388kgCO <sub>2</sub> e
Transmission and Losses	1,682kgCO <sub>2</sub> e

Electricity usage consists of small power and lighting power within our London studio and small power, lighting and heating within our Edinburgh studio.

We continue to source our energy from a 100% renewables company (Yu Energy, followed by Good Energy during the second half of the year), but we are also looking to reduce consumption. During 2021, with the roll out of laptops and a move to cloud storage there was a significant reduction in energy usage within the London office (-18%) but due to keeping windows open in Edinburgh to maintain a covid-safe space the heating energy went up, leading to a smaller reduction in electricity overall.

The Manchester studio is excluded - see leased assets.



# Scope 3 Including Well to Tank emissions

## 3.1: Purchased Goods and Services

Absolute Emissions	4,647kgCO2e	(+23%2020), (n/a2013)
Intensity Emissions	65kgCO2e/person	(+17%2020), (n/a2013)

This category is comprised primarily of emissions sources added in 2017. It includes the following: coffee, cloud storage, hotels, food and drink, milk and milk substitutes, sandwiches, printing paper, alcohol, water, tea and laundry. Following the re-occupation of the studios, these emissions bounced back slightly compared to 2020, and this year sees the inclusion of cloud computing (in 2020 only Microsoft Teams usage was included) which adds a little under 1% to our total footprint.

## 3.2: Capital Goods

Absolute Emissions	5,623kgCO2e	(-59%2020), (n/a2013)
Intensity Emissions	79kgCO2e/person	(-59%2020), (n/a2013)

This category is comprised primarily of emissions sources added in 2017 such as IT equipment and phones and fit-out & refurbishment of our offices. Comparisons to years before 2017 are not appropriate given that previous years' emissions are based on 2017 figures extrapolated back by intensity. During 2021 the laptop roll-out was finalised, and therefore this still represents an abnormally large emissions source for this year, however 2022 should see a reduction.

## 3.3: Fuel and Energy-related Activities

This category is captured within all other scopes.

## 3.5: Waste Generated in Operations

Absolute Emissions	224kgCO2e	(0%2020), (-30% 2013)
Intensity Emissions	3kgCO2e/person	(0%2020), (-28% 2013)

This category is based on the amount of waste for recycling and landfill that is generated in our offices. Most of the waste is paper for recycling, and this reduced dramatically during 2020 and 2021.

## 3.6: Business Travel

Absolute Emissions	3,398 kgCO2e	(+127%2020), (-89% 2013)
Intensity Emissions	48kgCO2e/person	(+124%2020), (-88% 2013)

The overwhelming majority of this category is formed of flight emissions. Whilst we implemented a new policy to illuminate the disproportionate impact of flights, the large reduction during 2020 should mainly be attributed to the pandemic, although it should be possible to maintain large amounts of these savings in future years.

— 305-3

## 3.7: Employee Commuting & Working from Home

Absolute Emissions (location)	6,500kgCO2e	(+2%2020), (n/a2013)
Intensity Emissions (location)	92kgCO2e/person	(+1%2020), (n/a2013)
Absolute Emissions (market)	8,518 kgCO2e	(+62%2020), (-33% 2013)
Intensity Emissions (market)	120kgCO2e/person	(+60%2020), (-31% 2013)

Due to the pandemic our commuting footprint reduced dramatically. At the same time the emissions related to working from home (small power and heating increases estimated via our personal footprint survey) became more accurate due to improvements in our survey. As 2021 saw two heating periods, this increased emissions relative to 2020, but the roll out of much lower energy equipment improved small power usage. We report location and market emissions for these based on the home energy supply reported by employees.

## 3.8: Upstream Leased Assets

Absolute Emissions (location)	2,524kgCO2e	(-61%2020), (n/a2013)
Intensity Emissions (location)	36kgCO2e/person	(-62%2020), (n/a2013)
Absolute Emissions (market)	0kgCO2e	(-100%2020), (n/a2013)
Intensity Emissions (market)	0kgCO2e/person	(-100%2020), (n/a2013)

This is entirely comprised of our Manchester studio's energy supply, which is paid for within the rent and which we have little control over as we sub-let desks. In previous years this was based on estimated usage, but we have now confirmed the actual usage and the supplier (Ecotricity) and so are able to report location and market figures.

## 3.9: Downstream Transportation and Distribution

Absolute Emissions	2,155kgCO2e	(+6%2020), (+252% 2013)
Intensity Emissions	30kgCO2e/person	(+5%2020), (+262% 2013)

This is entirely comprised of couriers. We typically use bike or motorcycle couriers where possible, however 2020 saw a large number of couriers used to deliver working from home resources and laptops to individual staff, leading to a temporary increase in emissions.

## Water (supply and treatment of waste)

Water Usage	409m3	(+2%2020), (-5%2013)
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The measured water usage within the studios is for use in WCs, food and drink preparation and dishwasher use (Manchester excluded). All water is supplied and disposed of via public utilities. For the purposes of reporting, it is assumed that discharge is equal to consumption.

— 305-3

— 306-1

— 303-1



— All-timber Sports Hall at King's Cross

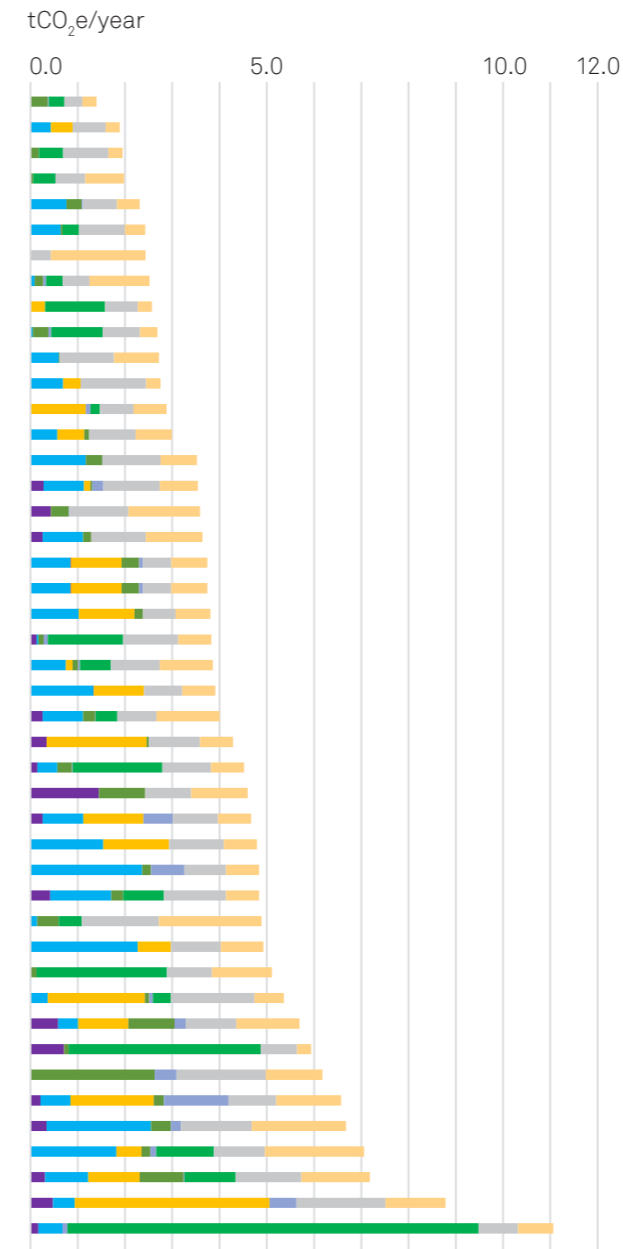
# Employee Footprints

As discussed in the previous section, a personal footprinting exercise was undertaken during 2021 and showed that there is a large variation in footprints, ranging from close to 1.5 tonnes to 11 tonnes.

This shows that there is a possibility for reduction by providing information and support. During 2021 we also ran a switching scheme for all staff to switch to 100% renewable tariffs which has had a positive uptake to date, now reflected within our footprint (market factor) due to this affecting homeworking emissions scopes. We are also continuing to improve facilities for cyclists in an attempt to reduce commuting footprints (though many of our staff live locally and are able to take public transport if they do not cycle).

In 2021 we became founding partners of “Climate Perks”, which is a policy developed by Climate Change charity “Possible”. This policy provides two additional days of annual leave per member of staff to compensate for low-carbon travel that may be slower than the equivalent flight. Due to the pandemic, we have not seen what the takeup will be, but since restrictions started to ease we have had increased takeup, with encouraging signs for 2022.

The personal footprint tool has been shared with over 50 organisations and remains free to use with updates each year. To get a copy of the tool follow this link or use the QR code below.



- Electricity
- Gas
- Other Fuel
- Personal Car/Motorbike
- Other Transport
- Commute
- Flights
- Food
- Stuff

— Personal Carbon Footprints across the practice showing large variations.

# Employment Figures

## Gender/Demographic Data table

The table below shows the breakdown of employees based on age, employment status and gender. This is broken down further into management, architectural and support staff. We also provide a summary table of responses to our annual demographic and diversity survey. Where results may lead to the identification of individuals, we have grouped responses.

During 2021 our employee turnover was around 8.5%, which was higher than the previous year but is still lower than the industry average of around 12% and the national average of around 15%. There are no significant seasonal variations in the numbers reported, though it should be noted that degree graduates on their “year out” from university are not counted within the staff turnover figures. There is no significant amount of business activity undertaken by non-employees, and no employees are covered by a collective bargaining agreement.

	Male	Female	Total
Permanent	38	28	66
Fixed-term	2	3	5
Full-time	38	23	61
Part-time	8	2	10
Architectural Staff	28	20	48
Support Staff	1	10	11
Management Team	11	1	12
London	29	23	52
Edinburgh	6	6	12
Manchester	5	2	7
Total	40	31	71

— 102-8

— 405-1

— 102-41

Ethnicity	% response
White English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	62.0%
White European	19.7%
Chinese	5.6%
No Survey Response	4.2%
Any other White background, please describe below	2.8%
Arab	1.4%
Black/ African/Caribbean/Black British Caribbean	1.4%
Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups	1.4%
Turkish	1.4%

Religious Beliefs	% response
No Religion	63.4%
Christianity (all denominations)	14.1%
Atheist	11.3%
No Survey Response	4.2%
Agnostic	2.8%
Answers with only one response each (grouped)	4.2%

Do you have a disability?	% response
No	87.3%
Yes	7.0%
No Survey Response	4.2%
Prefer not to say	1.4%

Do you identify as transgender?	% response
No	95.8%
No Survey Response	4.2%

Caring Responsibilities	% response
None	56.9%
Primary carer of a child or children (under 18 years)	31.9%
Other	6.9%
Secondary carer (another person carries out the main caring role)	2.8%
Primary carer of a disabled child or children (under 18 years)	1.4%

School Background	% response
UK state run or funded school (non-selective)	47.9%
Attended school outside the UK	21.1%
UK state run or funded school (selective on academic, faith or other grounds)	16.9%
UK independent/ fee-paying school (no bursary)	7.0%
No Survey Response	4.2%
Answers with only one response each (grouped)	2.8%

Parental Attainment	% response
At least one has a degree level qualification	62.0%
Qualifications below degree level	21.1%
No formal qualifications	11.3%
No Survey Response	4.2%

Did your household receive benefits as a child	% response
No	71.8%
Yes	15.5%
I don't know	8.5%
No Survey Response	4.2%

Did you receive free school meals?	% response
No	81.7%
Yes	8.5%
I don't know	5.6%
No Survey Response	4.2%

	Male	Fe-male	Non Bi-nary	Pre-fer Not to Say	No Survey Response	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	65-69	70+	Pre-fer Not to Say	No survey re-sponse
London	27	22	0	0	3	0	4	13	3	11	9	4	3	1	1	0	0	3
Edinburgh	6	6	0	0	0	0	1	2	2	1	2	2	1	0	1	0	0	0
Manchester	5	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	3	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Non-Architectural	1	10	0	0	0	0	1	3	1	3	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0
Management and Founders	10	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	4	2	2	1	2	0	0	2
Associate	12	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	4	2	1	0	0	0	0	0
Architect or equivalent level	10	7	0	0	0	0	0	6	7	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Architectural Assistant	5	7	0	0	1	0	4	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Total	38	30	0	0	3	0	5	17	8	14	11	6	4	1	2	0	0	3
	Male	0	2	5	5	8	9	4	3	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Female	0	3	12	3	6	2	2	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0

— 405-1

### Training & Development

Extensive CPD is carried out through the year, through formal seminars, lectures and courses as well as informal office meetings and presentations. To identify training requirements and to understand people's career development needs, 100% of staff receive six-monthly career development reviews. The breakdown of training received over the reporting period is as follows, though the significantly lower numbers for this are due to difficulty in tracking attendance during a large part of 2021, and the actual figures are likely to be far closer to normal years.

— 404-3

	Male	Female	Average
Architectural Staff	11hrs	12hrs	11.5hrs
Support Staff	7hrs	7hrs	7hrs
Average	11hrs	10hrs	10.5hrs

— 404-1



— 11-21 Canal Reach, King's Cross:  
A project with ambitious energy and embodied carbon targets completed in 2021

# GRI Criteria Index

Disclosures		Page	External Assurance
102-1	Name of the organization	5	No
102-2	Activities, brands, products, and services	6	No
102-3	Location of headquarters	5	No
102-4	Location of operations	5	No
102-5	Ownership and legal form	7	No
102-6	Markets served	5	No
102-7	Scale of the organization	6	No
102-8	Information on employees and other workers	38	No
102-10	Significant changes to the organization and its supply chain	5	No
102-11	Precautionary Principle or approach	6	No
102-12	External initiatives	24	No
102-13	Membership of associations	24	No
102-14	Statement from senior decision-maker	4	No
102-16	Values, principles, standards, and norms of behavior	7	No
102-18	Governance structure	7	No
102-40	List of stakeholder groups	21	No
102-41	Collective bargaining agreements	38	No
102-42	Identifying and selecting stakeholders	21	No
102-43	Approach to stakeholder engagement	21	No
102-46	Defining report content and topic Boundaries	18	No
102-47	List of material topics	16	No
102-48	Restatements of information	5	No
102-49	Changes in reporting	5	No
102-50	Reporting period	5	No
102-51	Date of most recent report	5	No

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102-52	Reporting cycle	5	
102-53	Contact point for questions regarding the report	5	No
102-54	Claims of reporting in accordance with the GRI Standards	5	No
102-55	GRI content index	44	No
102-56	External assurance	7, 44	No
103-1	Explanation of the material topic and its Boundary	18	No
302-1	Energy consumption within the organization	30	No
303-1	Water withdrawal by source	33	No
305-1	Direct (Scope 1) GHG emissions	30	No
305-2	Energy indirect (Scope 2) GHG emissions	31	No
305-3	Other indirect (Scope 3) GHG emissions	30-33	No
305-4	GHG emissions intensity	17	No
306-1	Water discharge by quality and destination	33	No
404-1	Average hours of training per year per employee	41	No
404-3	Percentage of employees receiving regular performance and career development reviews	20	No
405-1	Diversity of governance bodies and employees	38, 41	No
418-1	Substantiated complaints concerning breaches of customer privacy and losses of customer data	7	No

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