

Bennetts Associates awarded B Corp certification as highest scoring architectural practice in the UK

Bennetts Associates has been awarded B Corp Certification, with an impressive rating of 121.5. This is the highest score of any UK architectural B Corp, and marks Bennetts Associates' longstanding commitment to ethical business and purpose over profit.

Bennetts Associates now joins the global community of companies committed to the highest standards of verified social and environmental performance, public transparency, and legal accountability to balance profit and purpose. An ordinary business might have a score of 50, and to achieve B Corp certification requires at least 80 points, so 121.5 is exceptional.

Bennetts Associates is one of the UK's leading architecture practices and, since its inception 30 years ago, has operated with a strong environmental and social ethos across a broad range of sectors. The first architects in the world to have approved Science-Based Targets, Bennetts Associates is committed to accelerating progress in its business operations, including embodied carbon assessments for designs and a roadmap for delivering against the RIBA 2030 goals.

Peter Fisher, Director at Bennetts Associates said: "Joining the B Corp community marks a significant step for us as a practice, recognising our deep and longstanding commitment to operating with sustainability at the forefront of the mind, whilst ensuring a positive social impact. After completing the rigorous process, we are delighted to achieve such a high score and being a B Corp will really help as we continue to force the pace of environmental change and social response."

B Corp Certification not only evaluates a product or service, but also the material positive impact of the company behind it. The certification process is rigorous and uses the 'B Impact Assessment' tool to evaluate how a company's business model impacts five categories: workers, community, environment, customers and governance. Bennetts Associates' score across each category exceeds the averages with 'workers' and 'environment' being particularly high. Features include :-

- **Workers:** In 2016, Bennetts Associates became an Employee Ownership Trust (EOT), a significant landmark in the development of the practice which moved full ownership of the company to its employees. The EOT ensures that the fundamental ethos of the practice is protected for future generations, whilst continuing to run in the best interest of employees.
- **Environment:** In 2019, Bennetts Associates became the first architectural practice in the world to have approved Science-Based Targets. Bennetts Associates was also of the first architects in the world to sign up to UN's Race to Zero global campaign, that is rallying leadership and support from businesses, cities, and regions for a healthy, zero carbon recovery premised on sustainable growth. Bennetts Associates' B Corp 'Environment' score is twice that of similar sized B Corps.
- **Community:** Bennetts Associates has worked with Built By Us to develop an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) strategy, implemented within the practice and its projects but also with a focus on the wider profession. Collaboration with the likes of Blueprint for All and Camden STEAM and a work experience scheme have all targeted encouraging new generations from under-represented groups into the profession.
- **Customers:** By 2030, all completed Bennetts Associates buildings will aim to meet or exceed the RIBA 2030 Climate Challenge, which sets a series of targets for practices to adopt to reduce operational energy, embodied carbon and portable water. All new designs will also meet LETI A ratings for upfront carbon. This builds on leadership already demonstrated by

Bennetts Associates, including the UK's first certified NABERS scheme for performance design at Timber Square.

- **Governance:** Bennetts Associates operates with a vision statement “to design humane, tectonic and rigorous architecture that leads the fight against climate change.” This is supported by the EOT founding principles, which outline the key values of ethical operation and architectural quality that should remain at the heart of the business.

Jennifer Ford, Head of HR, Bennetts Associates, comments “B Corp certification was a challenging but hugely rewarding process. From start to completion we were pleased to see the progress we as a practice are making. Being held accountable is vital; it’s not about doing “just enough”, but about pushing the boundaries to do the best we possibly can – we always have, but this will help us to do even better. We look forward to being part of the B Corp community and for this relationship to shape and guide us in the future.”

Chris Turner, Executive Director of B Lab UK, says “We are delighted to welcome Bennetts Associates to the B Corp community. This is a movement of companies who are committed to changing how business operates and believe business really can be a force for good. We know that Bennetts Associates are going to be a fantastic addition to the community and will continue driving the conversation forward”.

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About Bennetts Associates

Bennetts Associates create sustainable and enduring architecture.

The practice has completed a diverse portfolio of cultural, workplace and education projects in both the public and private sector, ranging from masterplans to small historic buildings. As one of the UK's leading practices, its work has been celebrated with more than 200 awards over 34 years and has recently won three RIBA National awards. Bennetts Associates is an employee-owned trust with studios in London, Edinburgh, and Manchester.

Bennetts Associates is responsible for many prominent projects, including the Royal College of Pathologists and the London Borough of Camden headquarters in London, Storyhouse in Chester, the Bayes Centre for the University of Edinburgh, and Jaguar Land Rover in Warwickshire. The practice has recently completed Meta's UK HQ in King's Cross and the University of Edinburgh's Futures Institute is on site. It is also working on high profile projects in Greece and India that are targeting sustainability.

Bennetts Associates is a leading pioneer of sustainability - in April 2019 they became the world's first architects to secure Science Based Target approval and commit to the UN's Climate Neutral Now

campaign. The practice is a founding member of the UK Green Building Council and the first architecture practice in the world to report company impacts using the GRI Guidelines.

www.bennettsassociates.com

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About B Lab

B Lab UK is transforming the economy to benefit all people, communities, and the planet. A leader in economic systems change, our global network creates standards, policies, and tools for business, and we certify companies—known as B Corps—who are leading the way. To date, our global community includes 4,700 B Corps in 79 countries and 153 industries, and over 150,000 companies manage their impact with the B Impact Assessment and the SDG Action Manager.

Certification is administered by B Lab, the global non-profit network that certifies and mobilizes B Corps, which are for-profit companies that meet the highest standards of social and environmental performance, accountability, and transparency. Today there are more than 4,000 B Corps across 77 countries and 153 industries, unified by one common goal: transforming the global economy to benefit all people, communities, and the planet.

www.bcorporation.uk