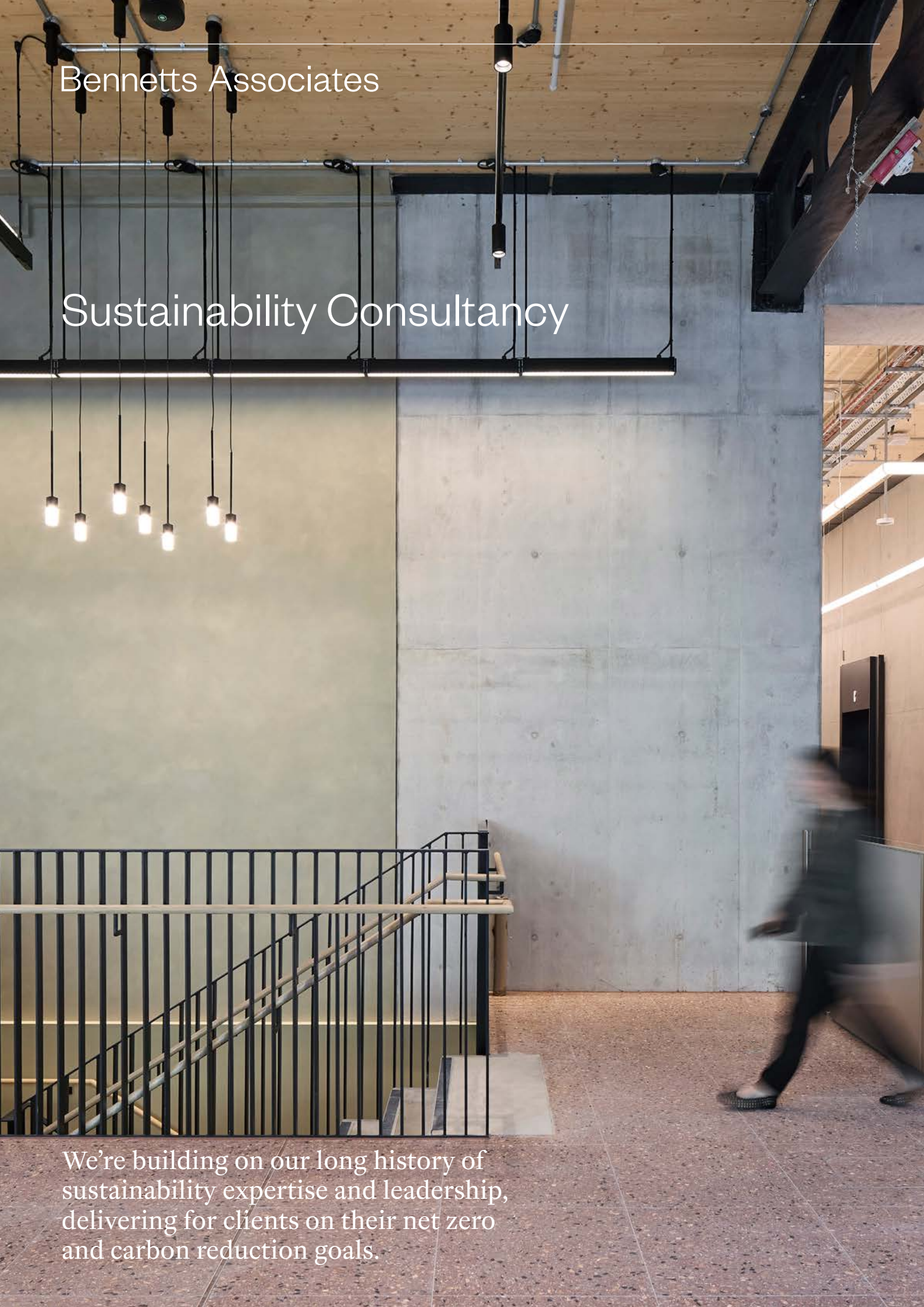
Bennetts Associates

Sustainability Consultancy



We're building on our long history of sustainability expertise and leadership, delivering for clients on their net zero and carbon reduction goals.

Located on a rural site on the edge of Bath, this Wessex Water headquarters building completed in 2001.

It achieved the highest ever BREEAM rating for a commercial office at that time and became a national benchmark for sustainability.

We are one of the UK's leading architectural practices, with a widely recognised reputation for being in the vanguard of sustainability and the current drive towards Net Zero Carbon.

We also now provide architect-led sustainability services for projects. Each service is built and shaped by our experience of delivery, passion for collaboration and communication, and client priorities.

Our services are flexible, modular and bespoke. We consider the needs of the client and the specific context of the project before building the services scope.

At Timber Square in London's Bankside, we set out to address the challenge of reducing both construction and operational emissions within a single redevelopment.

Genuine sustainability underpins all truly long-lasting architecture. We are recognised as an industry-leading pioneer of sustainability. We were the first architects in the world to set science-based targets, and set the record for the architects with the highest B Corp score in the UK.

Leadership

Our team of industry experts are heavily involved in impactful industry projects and research pieces. We were co-authors of the influential LETI Embodied Carbon Primer and the subsequent targets, and were one of the most represented organisations in the UK Net Zero Carbon Building Standard's creation.

As a studio we practice what we preach, and therefore understand the business strategies that sit behind project targets. We were the first organisation to report to the UKGBC's project scope 3 reporting, created our own science-based targets and are the highest scoring B Corp architect in the world.

Experience

Designing sustainable buildings is relatively easy, but delivering them is hard. We have a industry recognised track record of delivering pioneering buildings. We know how to navigate the complex journey of a project seeking to go beyond business as usual, and we know how to communicate this uncertainty and de-risk decision making.

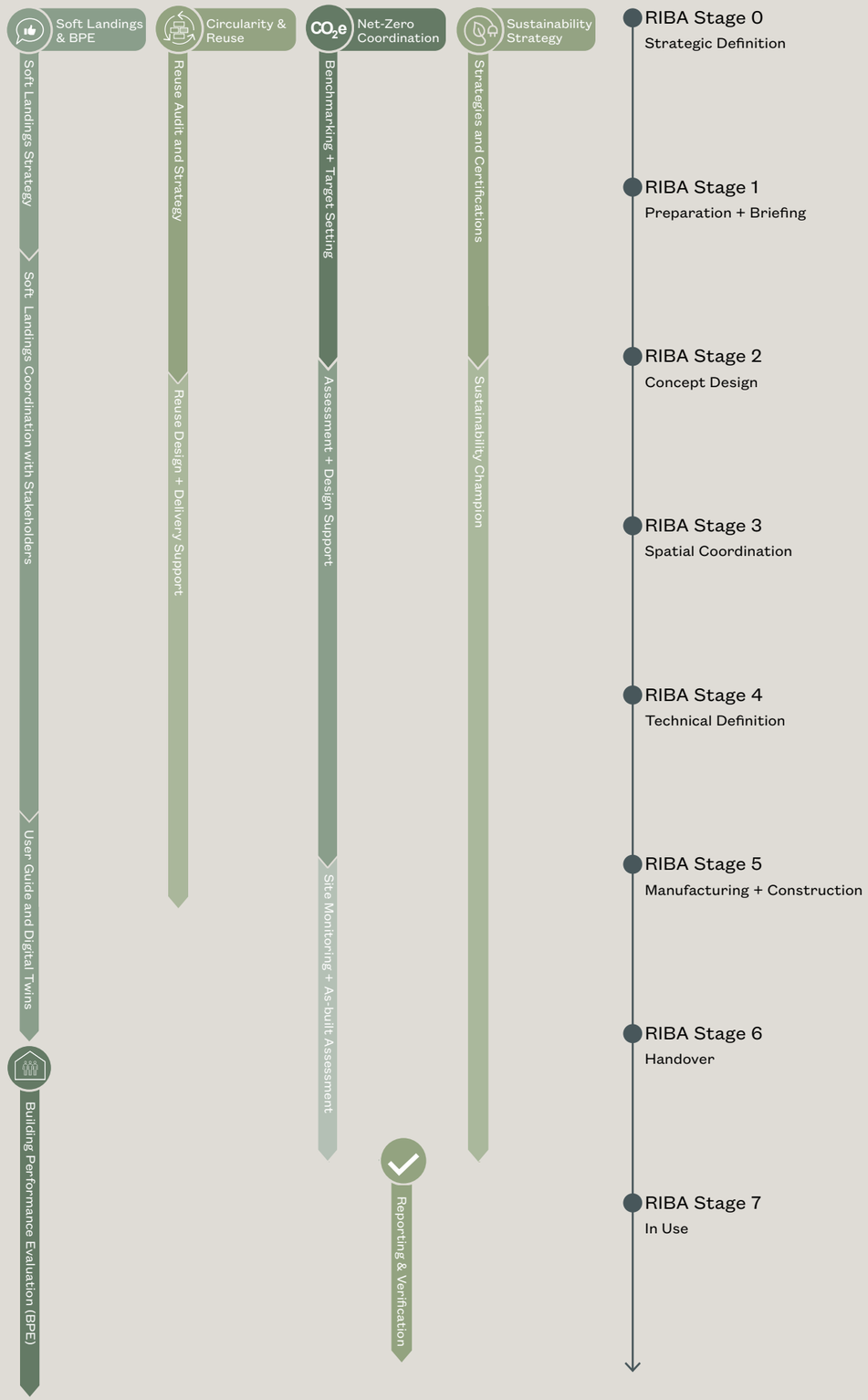
Architect Led Sustainability

We throw ourselves into every project, rather than imposing ourselves on it. We lead with integrity, professionalism and humanity. We take great joy in working closely with the consultant team, and through our experience as design-leads we know how and when to get things done without over burdening a team. Our team also has a strong working knowledge of how buildings are built, making sure that proposals don't just work on paper.

Track Record

We have been trialling these services internally for almost a decade, refining them to be lean but highly impactful for a design team. Most recently we have worked with clients to adapt these services and create meaningful outputs which support decision making and stakeholder communication.

Over the past two years we have delivered sustainability services to a number of clients in different sectors, bidding competitively against mainstream consultants and achieving high levels of satisfaction.



We deliver the full range of sustainability services from inception to post-completion. We are equally comfortable working with the design team to coordinate elements of the work that may sit within their scope. All of our services are designed to be industry leading, innovative and delivered quickly and simply.

Our service offer is flexible and modular, created from scratch around each project, and responding to the client's needs and the specific context. We will never recommend targets or additional scope if we don't believe it creates value or reduces the impact of the project.

Sustainability Strategy

The most flexible of our services, this could range from initial target setting to coordinating alignment with BREEAM or a client's bespoke sustainability framework. We are comfortable working at a project or portfolio level, and are also able to provide guidance on sustainability strategies at an organisation level based on our industry leading track-record.

Net-Zero Coordination

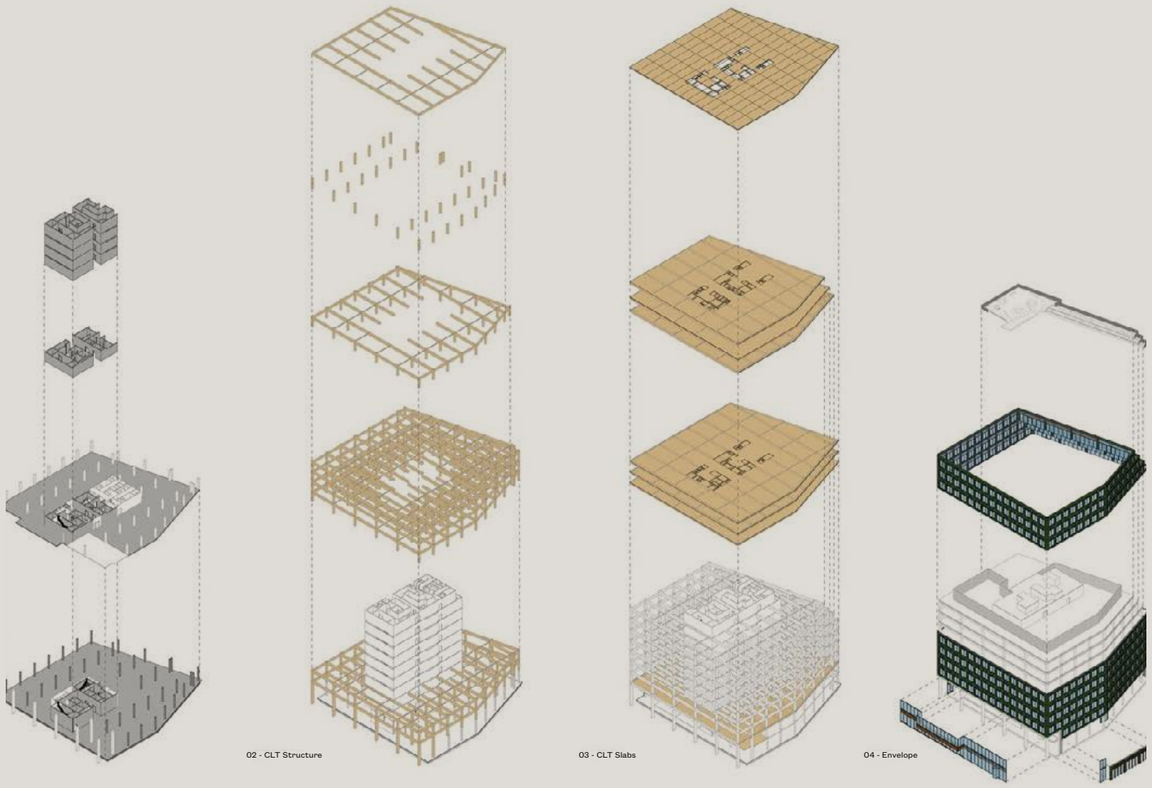
We can advise on carbon and energy, ranging from limited upfront carbon calculations through to a full UK NZCBS coordination role. We often work with the MEP engineer to deliver the energy elements of net-zero to avoid duplication.

Circularity & Reuse

We are able to advise on reuse, from undertaking or coordinating material reclamation audits all the way through to calculating circularity metrics alongside WLC calculations.

Soft Landings & Building Performance

We can undertake Soft Landings activities throughout the project, starting with analysis of existing buildings to support a Stage 0-1 Brief for a new project through to building performance evaluation at completion. We also partner with academia to provide specialist monitoring.



In building a service from the ground up we identified common themes within our projects, and set out to use our experience as architects and design-leads to provide a better service that has grown from our client feedback.

Our decision to provide sustainability services has been motivated by a frustration with our experience on projects with missed opportunities, muddied waters and unneccessary burdens on design teams. There are limited windows to seize and opportunity and too often these can be missed. Our services therefore are designed to be industry leading, innovative and delivered quickly and simply.

Early Stage Guidance and Clarity

Early stages are often quick moving and data-light. We use our experience alongside benchmarks to provide clarity on key decisions, and focus on regular but quick conversations with the design team to fill in any gaps. This means that we're helping guide the design at the same time as gathering information.

Project Specific Reports

We produce lean reports that are full of useful and specific information. As architects we know how to communicate complicated concepts simply and succinctly, and we know the importance of crafting a simple but compelling narrative that can be read by external stakeholders.

Viable Recommendations

We know that early stages need to focus on making a scheme simpler and reducing the material inputs, and bring a wealth of experience in making that happen. Targeted environmental design checks and studies can help the design team make quick decisions. When we do talk about specification it is with a knowledge of the realities of procurement and construction, helping identify risks to making the change happen.

Transparency

We pride ourselves in following the UKGBC QA process and being transparent about how we have arrived at a number. Whilst we use OneClick as a database, our process is tool agnostic and involves checks by senior architects. Our outputs are designed to be easy to interrogate and verify, reducing burden for any future net-zero certification.

The design for this timber pavilion champions locally sourced materials: a Douglas fir structure, UK-grown straw insulation panels and a blackened larch cladding that protects the breathable wall system beneath.

Our team of specialists are passionate about delivering resilient, regenerative and resource conscious buildings that align with clients' sustainability strategies.

Harry Sumner

Sustainable Design Lead covering all aspects of our consultancy on projects and masterplans.

Peter Fisher

Director overseeing sustainability work and lead for our 'More with Less' research workstream.

Ben Hopkins

Sustainability Lead, coordinating sustainability consultancy work and internal sustainability strategies.

Holly Bains

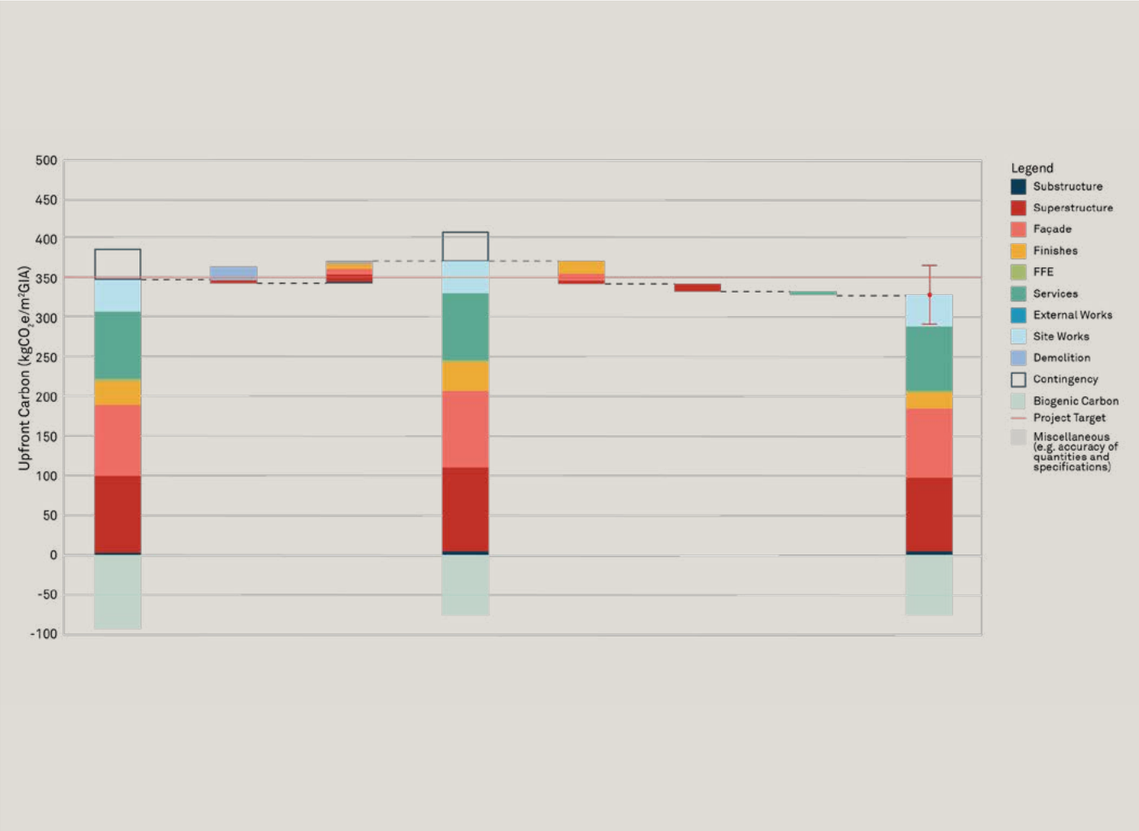
Manchester lead, involved in materials research, circularity and BPE.

Eleanor Derbyshire

Circularity lead also involved in materials research.

Morgan Hone

BPE and Smart Buildings lead involved in digital aspects of sustainability work.



As a purpose-driven developer focused on reducing environmental impact, Bywater required a practical and outcomes-focused approach to managing upfront carbon from early design through to delivery on site for 35 Fountain Street.

Project Details

Manchester	Bywater	Workplace	Net Zero Coordination
Location	Client	Sector	Service

The Challenge

Bywater is committed to delivering commercial and residential developments where sustainability is meaningfully embedded. For 35 Fountain Street, we were appointed to redesign an existing retrofit planning scheme around a new hybrid timber extension. Meeting Bywater's ambitious upfront carbon target of 350kgCO2e/m² required clear direction, fast analysis and close collaboration across the design team.

Our approach

With out embedded sustainability team, we work efficiently with the design programme to deliver analysis which can inform decisions with data in real time. Joining the project at Stage 3 meant we needed to move quickly to understand the existing scheme and identify the most effective opportunities for carbon reduction. Drawing on benchmarking studies, previous project data and our wider retrofit experience, we rapidly assessed how the scheme compared against Bywater's target and established a clear pathway for Upfront Carbon reductions of up to 40%.
We worked closely with the wider design team to test the carbon implications of key design decisions across major building elements including the façade, structure and building services. Alongside Max Fordham, we explored the operational and embodied carbon implications of moving to a decentralised ventilation strategy, while also reviewing more innovative options such as two-pipe distribution systems and fabric ductwork.

Throughout the process, we prioritised concise and decision-oriented reporting. Rather than producing endless generic reports, we focused on communicating the impact of design decisions clearly, highlighting the opportunities still available to the team and supporting Bywater's wider ESG reporting requirements through bespoke studies and portfolio-aligned outputs.

Outcomes and Impact

The project is currently on track to meet upfront carbon targets. We are supporting the project through delivery, managing carbon-related data collection requirements on site. This helps to streamline contractor coordination and position the scheme for future alignment with standards such as the UK Net Zero Carbon Building Standard.

Following completion of the Robotics Living Lab (RoLL) WIP Pavilion, we began a detailed Building Performance Evaluation (BPE) to help optimise the pavilion's environmental performance for occupants and to support future alignment with the UK Net Zero Carbon Building Standard.

Project Details

Mancester	MMU	Higher Education	Net Zero Coordination Building Performance Evaluation
Location	Client	Sector	Service

The Challenge

The Robotics Living Lab team had ambitious sustainability aspirations for the project, with a key objective being to create a high-performing, low-carbon research environment. As a 'Living Lab', the building also presented an opportunity to better understand environmental performance in operation. Bennetts Associates were appointed to deliver a 12-month BPE study, helping the team identify opportunities for optimisation while translating findings into practical insights for both the RoLL researchers and wider estates teams.

Our approach

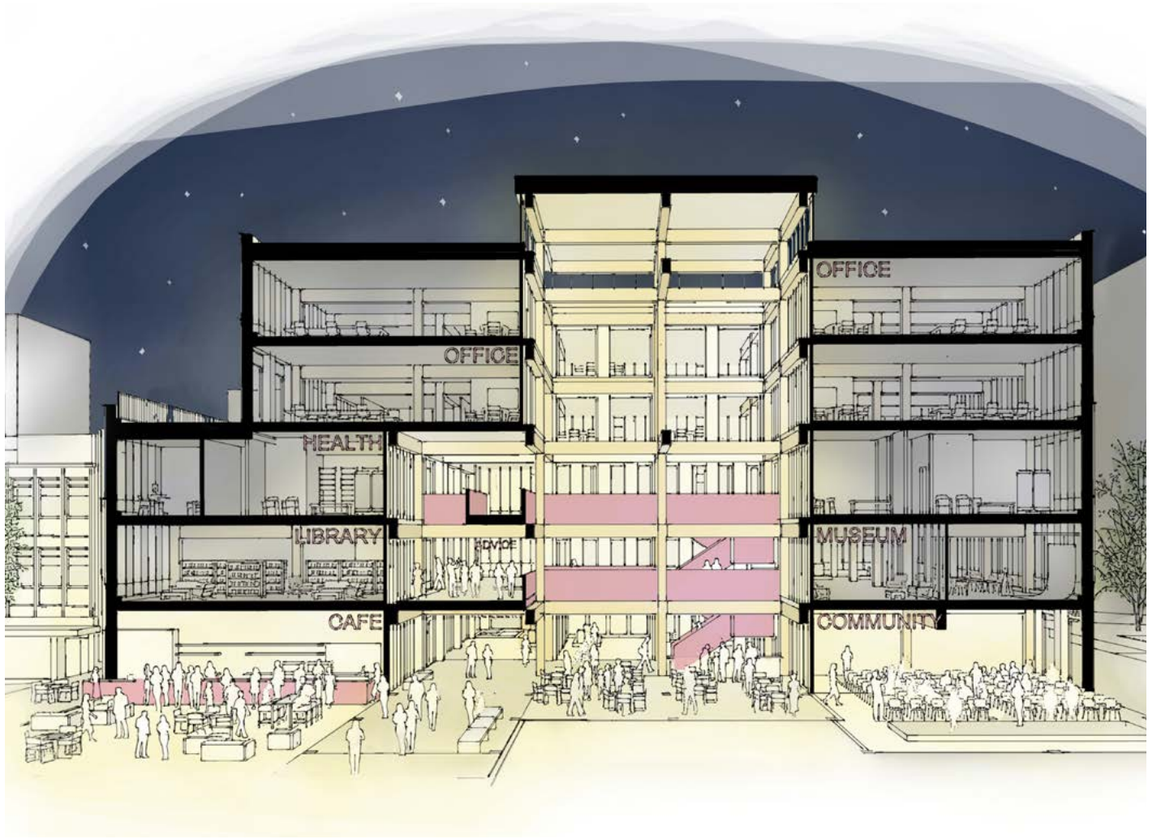
We understood the real challenge here was not solely During design, much of our focus had centred on passive design strategies and low-carbon material selection. Once the pavilion was occupied, our attention shifted toward understanding operational performance, with particular focus on energy and water consumption alongside internal environmental quality metrics including comfort and indoor air quality.

We developed a comprehensive monitoring strategy using wireless sensors and coordinated closely with the estates Building Management System (BMS) team to access real systems data and cross-reference performance trends.

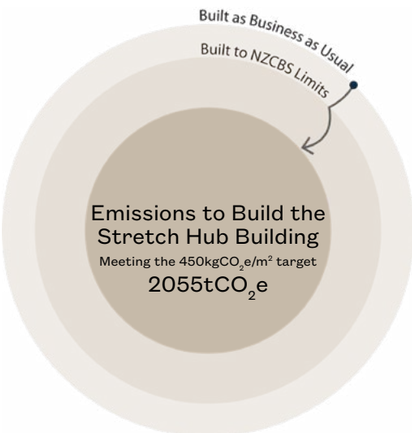
Throughout the process, we prioritised concise and visual reporting, focusing on clearly communicating building performance, emerging trends and practical opportunities for improvement. When elevated VOC levels were identified as a potential concern, we worked with an academic partner to undertake further detailed air quality sampling within the space to better understand possible emission sources.

Outcomes and Impact

The project is now entering the final quarter of the BPE process, with findings already informing operational improvements. Having previously supported the building through the UK Net Zero Carbon Building Standard Pilot Testing phase, we are now positioning the project for the potential of future formal alignment with the standard.



We supported the council to embed consistent, high-quality sustainability decision-making across its developments pipeline, aligning projects with local policy, national best practice and leading certification standards.



Project Details

East of England	Borough Council Regeneration Team	Local Authority	Sustainability Strategy Net Zero Coordination
Location	Client	Sector	Service

The Challenge

The Regeneration Team at the borough council oversee several public sector projects of varying scale and complexity, including the Public Services Hub. The team needed a consistent, practical way to translate the borough's 2030 targets into clear actions at project level.

Our approach

We understood the real challenge was not solely technical, but communicative. The Regeneration Team deal with such an array of stakeholders, all of whom will have different interpretation of what sustainability means and how this influences a project like the Hub.

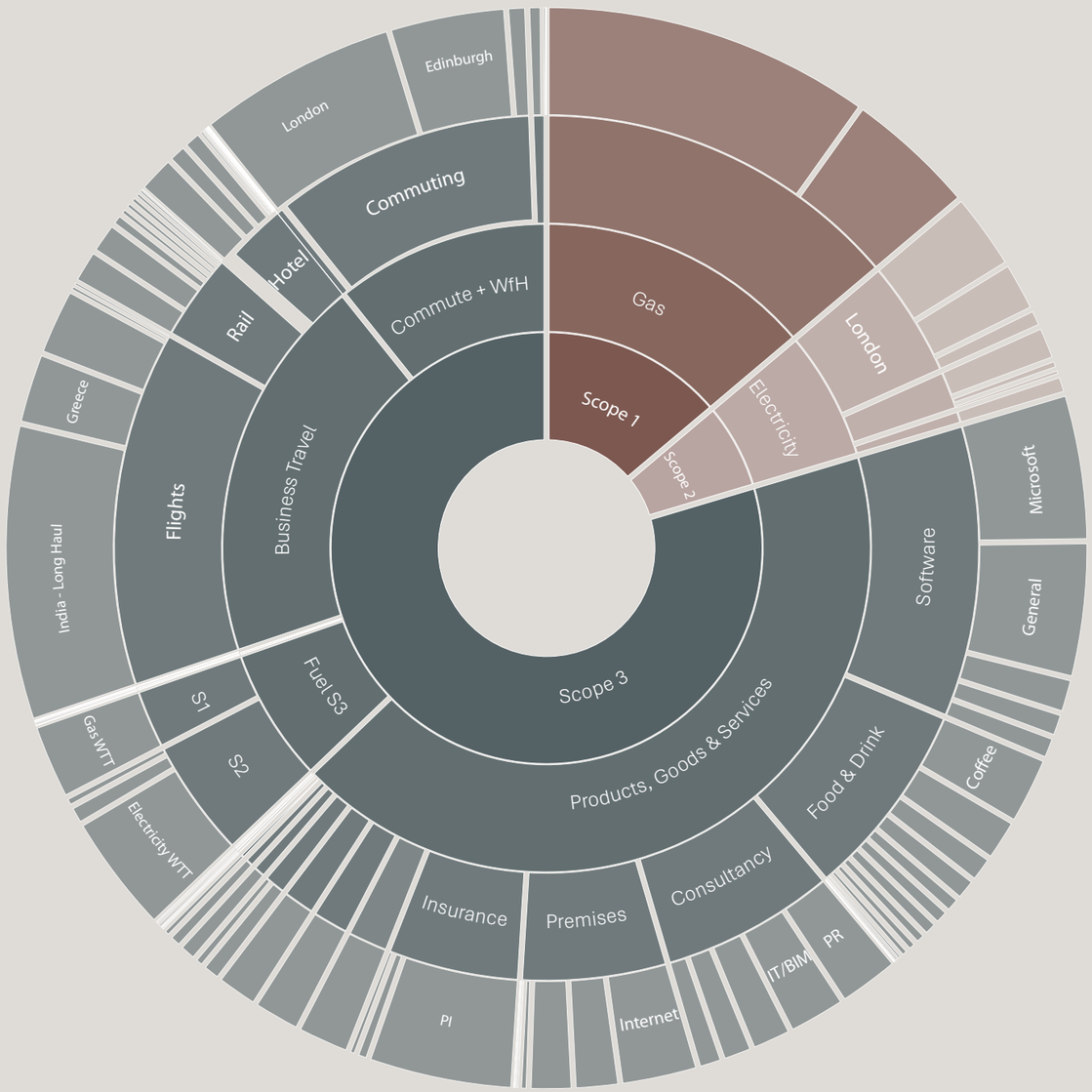
We delivered a bespoke sustainability toolkit built up from smaller independent modules which covered complimentary topics chronologically from big picture sustainability principles to building-level sustainability, certifications and project considerations. The format allowed the team to add and reshuffle the pack for different audiences and projects.

With ranging audiences and contexts in mind, from a project team at a kick off meeting, to elected councillors or residents at a consultation, we prioritised clear and graphic communication of complex principles.

To make complex concepts more tangible, we translated technical metrics into relatable comparisons, linking project-level carbon performance for the Hub to the borough's organisational emissions and the everyday carbon impacts of a resident.

Outcomes and Impact

Our work helped stakeholders better understand the scale and significance of design decisions for the Hub in relation to the borough's environmental impact. The toolkit is available to support the Regeneration Team across their project pipeline, helping to strengthen sustainability communication with stakeholders and support them in influencing meaningful early-stage sustainability decisions on projects.



Location	Market	Location (2)	Market (2)
114tCO_2e	104tCO_2e	101tCO_2e	96tCO_2e

GHG Inventory
Sunburst showing key contributors to our market based with regional time of use factors (Market 2)

We have been at the forefront of organisational reporting in the built environment for well over a decade, using our knowledge to feed back into projects, support others' journeys and better understand clients' needs.

Project Details

London	Bennetts Associates	Commercial	Sustainability Strategy
Location	Client	Sector	Service

The Challenge

Over the last decade we have sought to stay at the leading egde of organisational strategies and reporting whilst delivering this internally with minimal resource.

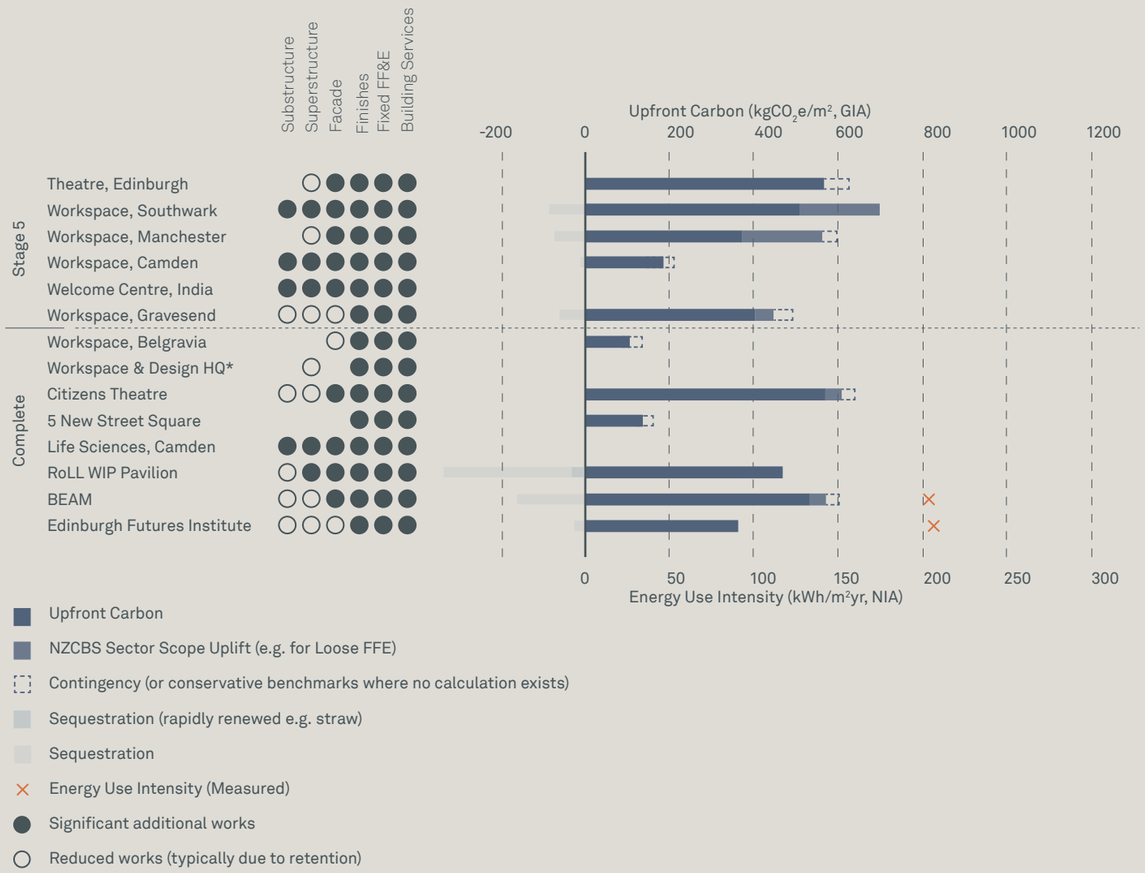
Our approach

Our science-based targets necessitate a full GHG inventory and so we developed a series of tools and systems to measure and report these with minimal resource. We were one of the first SMEs in the world to have approved science-based targets, and our ambitious Race to Zero targets require an equally ambitious decarbonisation strategy.

We developed reduction plans across a wide range of emissions sources including electrification of heat, changing printing types, implementing train-first business travel policies and moving to low-carbon coffee amongst others. Critically, we understand the need to balance high carbon impact policies with those that are highly visible and can remind staff about the importance of the strategy. We have also been at the leading edge of carbon removal strategies, and featured on an award-winning podcast which documents our partnershop with a UK biochar startup.

Outcomes and Impact

Our footprint is down 40% based on location based reporting, and we have helped a wide range of SMEs with understanding how to replicate our strategies, reporting and individual policies. Fundamentally our experience with reporting, and particularly Scope 3 has also made it possible to understand clients' needs when it comes to embodied carbon, and we find a lot of crossover between our work on organisational reporting and upfront carbon work.



Scope icons refer to the scope of works rather than calculation (all calculations have no significant exclusions, though may use benchmarks at early stages)
Click on project names for detailed breakdowns and any explanatory notes
For projects where no RICS aligned carbon calculation exists conservative benchmarks are used (e.g. GLA, or GLA inflated for international projects)
*As-built assessment in progress as of Q1 2026

With built projects spanning across five decades, we understand the challenges our clients face when it comes to driving project ambition and managing data reporting across a large portfolio.

Project Details

Location	Client	Sector	Service
London	Bennetts Associates	Commercial	Sustainability Strategy

The Challenge

When projects move quickly across different sectors, scales and delivery teams, maintaining a consistent approach to target setting, assessment and reporting can become increasingly complex, even across our own project portfolio.

Our Approach to Driving Ambition

Rather than treating sustainability as a standalone exercise, we integrate it directly into the design and delivery process. Our approach begins with establishing clear, measurable and realistic KPIs, typically aligned with industry best practice guidance such as the UK Net Zero Carbon Building Standard.

Refining our standardised construction elements and specifications allows us to embed sustainability more consistently across our portfolio of live projects. By undertaking detailed carbon studies and product research on commonly used building elements such as internal partitions, finishes or façade systems, we develop approved specifications with improved environmental performance.

To manage our project data, we have developed robust QA methodologies which use industry guidance and our own project experience and benchmark data. This step is key to ensuring all carbon assessments, whether internal or external, can be reported publicly with confidence.

Outcomes and Impact

Firsthand experience managing ambition and reporting data across our portfolio has helped us develop a robust Portfolio Management Service to help clients with similar issues. By developing scope guidance, rundertaking QA reviews, developing eporting templates, and forming standard operating procedures, we can ensure consultants' work across all projects can be compared and reported transparently.

Bennetts Associates

London
Canal Building
137 Shepherdess Walk
London N1 7RQ
+44 (0)20 7520 3300
mail@bennettsassociates.com

Manchester
38-42 Mosley Street
Manchester, M2 3AZ
+44 (0)161 674 0135
manchester@bennettsassociates.com

Edinburgh
3 Boroughloch Square
Edinburgh EH8 9NJ
+44 (0)131 667 7351
edin@bennettsassociates.com

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