

Sustainability & Wellbeing in Real Estate

Policy and business recommendations

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1. LEGAL STRATEGIES

- Amending lease agreements to include sustainability and wellbeing considerations and implications for both landlord and tenant ensuring that risk is properly managed between parties.
- Lawyers could advocate for legal changes necessary to advance this agenda.
- Lawyers could lobby government for changes in the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954, similar to the lobbying role played by the British Property Foundation.
- Advocate for minimum legislative building standards for designing healthy buildings and designing with human health in mind for example, enhancing planning law requirements.
- There is scope for a coalition of lawyers working exclusively to advance this agenda.
- Government could advance this agenda through punitive measures for businesses failing to implement sustainability and wellbeing indicators within their offices. For instance, fines, penalties, or incentives.
- Law firms could initiate strategic collaborations with organisations like Architects Climate Action Network (ACAN) and support architects to advocate for improvements in this space. This could also involve advocating for policy change or legislative changes.
- Lawyers could support on building the evidence-base for policy makers through producing reports or thought-leadership pieces about the impact/role of sustainability and wellbeing indicators in real estate.
- A policy issue, in that the government should do more to ban the use of building materials which have a negative impact on the mental wellbeing of staff, tenants, landlords or occupiers.

2. REASSESSING AND REDESIGNING THE WORK ENVIRONMENT;

Our recommendations following our research in relation to the overarching areas for consideration in *designing, redesigning or assessing the work environment*:

- recognise the potential impact of the physical office environment beyond the legal requirements of the Health and Safety Executive (HSE)
- engage staff in workplace design and where possible allow greater flexibility
- incorporate **best practice in light of the current research into office design**

3. TAILORED SUSTAINABILITY AND WORKSPACE ASSESSMENTS RECOMMENDATION

Workspace assessments could examine the *questions* below:

- Has the Property or the building in which it is situated (“Building”) been accredited for wellness through organisations such as the WELL Building Standard, Fitwel or BREEAM?
- **If the Building has not been accredited then:**
- Supply details of any of the following assessments in relation to the Property and the Building: Air quality; Water quality; Light assessment; Noise assessment
- Has the Landlord taken any steps to promote a clean air policy and to reduce or minimise the sources of indoor air pollution at the Property and the Building?
- Is the water supply to the Property and the Building filtered? Does the Landlord have a programme of regular water quality testing at the Property and the Building?
- If there is a communal café/restaurant for the use of all the occupiers of the Building, does the Landlord operate this or is it through a third-party provider?
- Where the Landlord employs contractors for cleaning, repair and maintenance or operating any communal café/restaurant at the Building, does the tenant have any particular requirements in relation to the products used for example, suppliers must only use environmentally friendly products?
- Provide details of any wellbeing programme that supports an active lifestyle for all the occupiers in the Building which the tenant can participate in.
- Does the Landlord have a policy to promote wellbeing at the Building?

