

# *Corporate sustainability lessons learned*

## 7 More London: a catalyst for behaviour change

*We're building our blueprint for better business. We're learning what works and what doesn't. We know our clients are, too, and have expressed an interest in us sharing our experience.*

*So we've created this series of 'lessons learned' from our major initiatives.*

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# Driving sustainable behaviours

As the leading professional services firm, we have a proactive sustainability agenda, which seeks to pioneer new solutions to the challenging issues of climate change, resource constraints and social equity. And, as a business of services, people are our major asset, so understanding what sustainability means for our people agenda is critical.

When we when moved 5,500 of our 16,000 people into a new office in London, we knew we had to take advantage of the opportunity to change mindsets and behaviours.

The case study below outlines what we learnt from this experience including the considerations, challenges and insights for future programmes.

Moving into a new building isn't just about glass and steel, desks and lockers. It requires a careful change management approach to ensure business continuity and happy staff. But it also offers a platform for sustainability – an opportunity to raise awareness, enhance understanding and change behaviours.

This document summarises our approach and lessons from our move of 5,500 of our employees into 7 More London in Southwark, London in May 2011.

## **Why we moved**

We have a significant employee pool in London, and have historically been based at two main offices near to central London train stations. But in 2006, the decision was taken to demolish Southwark Towers, the firm's office above London Bridge railway station, as part of an overall regeneration of the station and creation of a business district close to the river in SE1.

Southwark Towers was an old building designed in 1976 and no longer fit for purpose, and the change provided us

with the opportunity to refresh our real estate strategy, identifying a new building which would meet our needs for the next twenty years.

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“Our vision for 7 More London was based on our values... doing the right thing for our people, our communities and our planet.”  
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*Roger Reeves, Head of Infrastructure*  
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We undertook a business review and extensive stakeholder consultation to inform the design process, in a programme called “Future Working Environment”. Key to the specification for the building were three objectives: reducing overall floor space and improving utilisation rates, whilst ensuring flexibility to meet current and future business needs; providing a welcoming, comfortable workplace for our people, enhancing their wellbeing and productivity and allowing them to collaborate across the firm and with our clients; and making the building an exemplar for low carbon design.

## **The greenest building in the capital**

7 More London has achieved the highest possible accolade for its sustainability credentials, a BREEAM<sup>1</sup> Outstanding rating, an A rated Energy Performance Certificate and a carbon footprint which is designed to be 58% lower than a standard building of its size and type. It's the first building in the capital to achieve such high sustainability standards.

This was the result of a five-year collaboration between us and architects Foster and Partner, environmental engineers BDP and contractor Overbury.

Achieving a BREEAM Outstanding rating took senior level buy-in to the value of sustainability, a combination of courage and vision, and attention to detail. To achieve energy and carbon reductions we had to think outside the box, pioneering an on-site tri-generator to provide electricity and efficient heating and cooling. The generator is supplied with recycled cooking oil from our restaurants, which is processed in a small, local refinery in central London.

<sup>1</sup> 7 More London is the first building in the capital to achieve BREEAM Outstanding rating – Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) is the standard for measuring the sustainability of buildings in the UK and Europe, with Outstanding being the highest rating.

We also assessed all possible micro-generation and lighting technologies eventually selecting solar water heating, extensive LED<sup>2</sup> lighting and regenerative breaking across our bank of lifts. And every piece of furniture and every furnishing was scrutinised for its environmental impact.

And we had to see beyond the unusual shape of the site, which had deterred several organisations, to envisage how this might actually be a strength, allowing a building design that maximises daylight for staff and reduces our lighting needs.

Finally, we went beyond usual designs by creating more than 1,400 square metres of green roof space, specially designed to encourage threatened species of birds and insects. In doing so, we're supporting urban biodiversity and contributing to the development of green corridors to enable climate change adaptation.

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**“It was important to get the big decisions right – things like energy supply. But we also wanted to think about sustainability in the round.”**

*Bridget Jackson,  
Head of Corporate Sustainability*

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### **Managing the change**

For most of our staff, the change in physical location was relatively minor: modelling of our staff commuting patterns before determining the location of our new office meant that disruption to daily journeys was minimal. Nevertheless, the new open plan layout and hotelling system was a change in working practice to some, requiring them to book a work space in advance and to check in upon arrival each day.

So to encourage the right behaviours, and to discourage “nesting”, we've consciously not provided storage at work stations. Our people have a storage space, either a locker or a secure shelf in a cabinet near to their work area, strengthening our clear desk policies and underpinning an even more stringent data security policy.

A detailed communications programme ensured every business unit was aware of what the change meant for them. Personal messages using videos starring recognisable individuals from each team highlighted the new “journey” to work and offered opportunities to come and see the office ahead of the move, highlighting the benefits and creating excitement about the change.

And, to further encourage personal engagement, two ‘Friends and Family Days’ were held at weekends in May inviting staff to come and tour the building with their friends and relatives. Over 7,000 people attended, enjoying family activities to celebrate our new home, and taking part in our Sustainability Trail to reveal its sustainability features in a fun way.

### **Sustainability and our employees**

We help our clients with services ranging from accounting and assurance, to tax and business advice. Issues relating to sustainability represent both risks and opportunities for our clients, who need to navigate changing markets, new legislation and regulation or new business standards. It's vital for our people to be cognisant of how sustainability impacts business.

We conducted a full employee survey in January 2011 to identify the attitudes and behaviours of our people towards sustainability and to provide insight that would inform the development of an effective, new awareness and behavioural programme.

The results showed that the overwhelming majority understand the importance of the agenda but wanted to learn more about the specifics, both for their clients and for their own day to day working practices.

This provided us with a mandate for broad-scale communications and information about sustainability at 7 More London.

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**“96% of our people think it is important that we address our environmental issues, and 91% feel we should be helping clients do the same.”**

*Employee survey, January 2011*

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### **A catalyst for sustainability**

Academic research<sup>3</sup> highlights that habit is a significant barrier to behaviour change, and that major discontinuities are helpful moments in which people are open to new ideas. Sustainability research<sup>4</sup> also points to a “psychological contract” that makes people more willing to act if they can see others do too.

So moving to our new office provided a unique opportunity for us to demonstrate that we'd invested in sustainability and invite our people to get personally involved. It was also a strong platform for us to raise awareness of the practical aspects of sustainability for our business and offices, introducing some of the concepts of sustainability (closed loop, regenerative power, renewable energy, ecosystem services).

Finally, our research showed that there are five distinct segments across our organisation, with different levels of sustainability understanding and engagement. As a result, we used the move to recruit staff to an ongoing, permission-based marketing programme across the business that will be able to reach the mainstream, not just those with pre-existing “green” values.

### **Building our Blueprint for Better Business**

We developed and launched an integrated campaign under the umbrella concept of “Building our blueprint for better business” to convey our role in pioneering new ways of doing business and measuring value.

We highlighted the tangible aspects of sustainability in 7 More London through points of discovery around the building. Placing messaging in clever and unusual places achieved high visibility, and witty headlines captured the imagination of our staff.

2 Light Emitting Diode.

3 Interventions to Break and Create Consumer Habits. Verplanken B. & Wood, W. 2006.

4 I will if you will. Towards sustainable consumption. Stevenson, G. & Keehn, B. 2006.

By way of example, signage at our lifts greeted staff with the message “Braking, the good news. This smart lift captures the energy from braking and reuses it. It contributes to a 58% lower carbon footprint in this building”. Messages on the mirrors in our washrooms introduced the notion of closed loop recycling, promoting the fact that the paper towels were made from our recycled archive files. Table talkers in our restaurant grabbed attention with the headline “Bigger fish to fry”, telling staff about our use of renewable energy, by recycling the cooking oil from our fish and chips and using it to power our trigenerator”.

The discovery points were supported by an exhibition in the main entrance to the new building, highlighting the sustainability credentials of 7 More London. A film telling the story of the development and using animations to bring to life ‘hidden’ technologies was also shown on iPads and at the Friends and Family Days.

We incentivised staff to get involved with a branded notebook and the Corporate Sustainability team manned the exhibition stand, talking to staff about sustainability in the firm and signing them up to the Blueprint programme.

The campaign ran for four weeks, followed by a direct mail programme with monthly activities including invitations to attend our Sustainability Unwrapped speaker series, to participate in Cycle Challenges and to pilot our new electric vehicle scheme.

### Results

We’re measuring the impact at both a programmatic and strategic level and we’ve been delighted with the results so far.

Whilst previous campaigns have largely attracted limited numbers of people who are overtly supportive of the environmental agenda, this campaign

achieved a sign up rate of 35% of the addressable workforce population, with a good spread across the different segments identified in our research.

Our cycling campaign exceeded our expectations with over 800 people asking for information on cycling to work and 100% take-up of our free cycling maintenance offer. We linked our community activities to the Blueprint concept with over 250 additional people registering to volunteer in the local community, more than doubling previous rates. We’ll measure the impact on awareness, engagement and behaviours using pre- and post- occupancy surveys and YouMatter People survey later this year.

### Lessons

Throughout the development and execution of the programme, we learnt valuable lessons about engaging our staff on the topic of sustainability.

1. Moments of change, such as office moves, are effective platforms for engaging staff on sustainability
2. Face to face engagement in high traffic areas ensures stand out in a cluttered context of ongoing communications
3. Incentives should have broad appeal for all employees to achieve scale: this may mean moving away from overtly “green” promotional items
4. An offer with an immediate payback and high visibility helps create word of mouth and amplify results
5. Supporting signage cuts through when it uses unusual channels and “transitions”, (such as comfort breaks and lift journeys) in a busy working day
6. Creating understanding and changing behaviours requires a long-term programme with a commitment to research and measurement to inform and evaluate each campaign within it.

### About sustainability at PwC

For more information on our broader corporate sustainability agenda or to see the video Building our Blueprint for 7 More London, visit: [www.pwc.co.uk/corporatesustainability](http://www.pwc.co.uk/corporatesustainability)



Exhibition showing sustainability features of 7 More London



Film about how 7 More London achieved its credentials as the greenest building in the capital: sustainability Building Our Blueprint for 7 More London

([www.pwc.co.uk/corporatesustainability/7morelondon](http://www.pwc.co.uk/corporatesustainability/7morelondon))



Points of discovery around the building, highlighting specific sustainability features

[www.pwc.co.uk/corporatesustainability](http://www.pwc.co.uk/corporatesustainability)

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