

# The Time is Now

Our Sustainability  
Statement of Intent for 2030  
v2.0





**Toby Courtauld**  
Chief Executive

## ‘The world of sustainability is complicated, but at GPE, our approach is simple.’

We are decarbonising our business to become net zero by 2030, whilst integrating climate resilience across our spaces and business processes. We are continuing to work within our communities to create a lasting positive social impact. Health and wellbeing remains front and centre of our approach to the design and operation of our spaces.

We recognise the importance of restoring nature and the contribution nature can make to climate change mitigation and adaption. We are therefore integrating measures to improve biodiversity across all four pillars of our strategy.

Working with our customers, supply chain partners and communities, we are also putting innovation and the latest technology at the core of our approach, to help London to thrive.

Our Statement of Intent was originally launched in 2020, since then our approach and thinking on sustainability has developed considerably, in this, version 2.0 we have updated and repositioned our Climate Resilience pillar whilst continuing to prioritise reducing carbon emissions.

We want to be held to account as we continue to evolve our approach to sustainability and intend to update this document again as thinking on the delivery of net zero carbon, approaches to offsetting and regulation on energy performance matures. We have therefore included an update on our progress so far.

### **The Time is Now**

# Why it's time to update our Statement of Intent

In May 2020, we set out our Sustainability Statement of Intent – ‘The Time is Now’. Since then we have published ‘Our Roadmap to Net Zero’ and an ambitious Social Impact Strategy.

Knowledge on carbon emissions in the built environment has substantially advanced since we launched our Statement of Intent. In particular, embodied carbon measurement and the use of operational energy benchmarks has moved at pace.

Furthermore, initiatives such as Task Force on Climate-Related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) and CDP (formally the Carbon Disclosure Project) have supported a much greater awareness on what it might take to make a business climate change resilient.

The COVID-19 pandemic also impacted business thinking on social impact and health and wellbeing, fast tracking many emerging concepts.

Three years on, after delivering our first net zero carbon building at 50 Finsbury Square, we are updating our Statement of Intent and evaluating progress on our journey so far.



**We will decarbonise our business to become net zero by 2030**

#### Targets

- Reduce our energy intensity by 40% by 2030
- Reduce our carbon intensity by 69% across our occupied portfolio by 2030
- Reduce our embodied carbon by 40% across our new build developments and major refurbishments by 2030

#### Progress made to 2023YE

- We have reduced operational energy intensity by 32.2% from our 2016 baseline
- Our operational carbon intensity has reduced by 66% when compared with our 2016 baseline
- On average, our embodied carbon has reduced by 28%\* when compared to our 2020 baseline
- Our Internal Carbon Price of £95 per tonne has raised 768K reallocated to energy efficiency projects

\* subject to external verification



**We will design climate change resilient and adaptable spaces**

#### Targets

- Increase biodiversity net gain across our portfolio by 25% by 2030
- Prioritise renewable energy technologies
- Put a Climate Change Resilience Strategy in place

#### Progress made to 2023YE

- 62% increase in biodiversity net gain delivered, at our Hanover Square development. For year ended March 2023, 8.6% uplift in biodiversity net gain across our portfolio
- Renewable technology is installed at all major refurbishments and new build developments
- Our Statement of Intent and Our Brief for Creating Sustainable Spaces form part of our Climate resilience strategy



**We will create a lasting positive social impact in our communities**

#### Targets

- Create £10 million of social value by 2030
- Support local charities focused on London communities
- Partner with education, employment and skills initiatives
- Support modern slavery initiatives

#### Progress made to 2023YE

- £2.4 million of social value created
- New partnership launched in 2022 with XLP, raising £85K to date. £431K raised for Centrepoint (since April 2018)
- 29 weeks of internships provided. 2 apprentices appointed to the GPE team
- Executive Committee training programme on diversity, equity and inclusion completed with Arrival Education
- £30K donated to support survivors of modern slavery



**We will put health and wellbeing front and centre**

#### Targets

- Integrate wellbeing considerations into the design of our spaces
- Support improved internal and external air quality
- Support the health and wellbeing of our people, customers and supply chain partners

#### Progress made to 2023YE

- Key aspects of WELL Building Standard and Fitwel including air quality measures incorporated in our spaces
- Air quality sensors installed to measure internal air quality. External air quality measures including use of consolidation centres and additional biodiversity measures integrated as standard
- Regular health and wellbeing events for people, customers and supply chain partners



# The Time is Now v2.0

## We are



**Integrating  
climate resilience  
across our  
business**

See page 05



**Decarbonising  
our business to  
become net zero  
by 2030**

See page 07



**Putting health  
and wellbeing  
front and  
centre**

See page 09



**Creating a lasting  
positive social  
impact in our  
communities**

See page 11

## How

- Address the transitional risks of climate change and implement net zero carbon transition plans at each asset
- Integrate climate adaptation and resilience measures into our buildings and increase biodiversity net gain by 25% across our portfolio by 2030 (requiring a year on year uplift of 3%)
- Work with our supply chain partners to improve the climate resilience of our supply chain
- Support our communities to become more climate resilient
- Reduce energy intensity by 40% across our occupied portfolio by 2030 (when compared to our 2016 baseline), using nature-based solutions as appropriate to support passive cooling measures
- Reduce carbon intensity by 69% across our occupied portfolio by 2030 (when compared to our 2016 baseline)
- Reduce embodied carbon by 40% by 2030 (when compared to our 2020 baseline) across new build developments and major refurbishments
- Offset residual carbon only once above measures have been addressed
- Integrate wellbeing considerations into the external and internal design of our spaces
- Use nature-based solutions to support improved external air quality
- Manage and monitor indoor air quality to support the health and wellbeing of our customers
- Promote initiatives to support the health and wellbeing of our people, customers and supply chain partners
- Create at least £10 million of social value in our local communities by 2030 (from 2021) and prioritise improving access to nature
- Support charitable and non-profit organisations that challenge inequality, champion diversity and tackle health and wellbeing
- Champion diverse skills and accessible employment
- Support the growth of local business and social enterprises



The Time is Now

# We are integrating climate resilience across our business





## We are integrating climate resilience across our business

### Address the transitional risk of climate change and implement net zero carbon plans at each asset

Working with our customers, we are implementing our net zero carbon roadmap whilst prioritising energy efficiency and energy security.

We are ensuring that all major refurbishments and developments are fossil fuel free<sup>1</sup>, whilst transitioning our existing portfolio away from fossil fuel reliant systems. We will work with our customers to find alternatives to fossil fuel powered life-safety back up systems.

By implementing NABERS UK and utilising the Carbon Risk Real Estate Monitor (CRREM) tool we will be able to drive improvements and monitor our progress.

For new acquisitions we will undertake net zero carbon due diligence to create an appropriate asset level transition plan.

We will provide a comprehensive disclosure on climate risk annually.

### Integrate climate adaptation and resilience measures into our buildings

We will include climate risk and opportunity in asset business plans.

By installing external green walls, living roofs, trees and terrace planting to support passive cooling, we will increase biodiversity net gain across our portfolio by a minimum of 3% annually.

We are investing in sustainable drainage features such as rain gardens and blue roofs to manage surface water run off during storm events.

To improve longevity and adaptability we are designing our buildings to reduce the need for demolition, creating adaptable spaces with materials passports to encourage the dismantling of our buildings at the end of their life.

A climate resilient business requires a net zero carbon pathway to mitigate carbon emissions and a climate adaptation plan to support business resilience to climate change. Comprehensive climate disclosure supports lenders and investors understand business exposure to climate risk.

 See Better Buildings Partnership Climate Resilience Guide [www.betterbuildingspartnership.co.uk](http://www.betterbuildingspartnership.co.uk)

### Work with our supply chain partners to improve the resilience of our supply chain

Working with our supply chain partners, we are improving transparency in our supply chain, ensuring that materials are sourced ethically with climate and nature-related impact in mind.

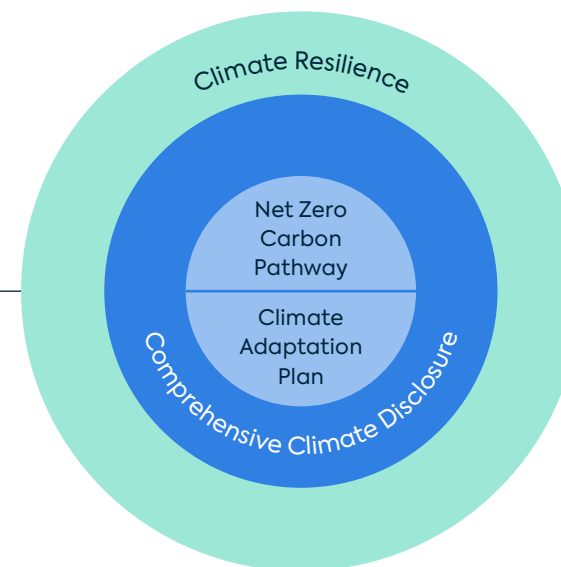
We will work with our partners to consider the impact of extreme weather events on our supply chain and collaborate to improve resilience and reduce business risk.

### Support the climate resilience of our communities

Through our developments we are creating public realm spaces with embedded nature-based solutions where space allows.

Through our Social Impact Strategy, we are supporting organisations that work to address climate change-related inequalities in our local communities, such as fuel poverty and access to green spaces, in addition to promoting organisations that look to develop green skills (see our Social Impact Strategy for more).

We will continue to support increased biodiversity in our London boroughs by working with organisations that maintain pocket parks and green spaces which reduce the urban heat island effect and support improved air quality.



 [Creating Sustainable Spaces Brief](http://www.gpe.co.uk/documents/sustainable-spaces-brief)  
[www.gpe.co.uk/documents/sustainable-spaces-brief](http://www.gpe.co.uk/documents/sustainable-spaces-brief)

 [Our Social Impact Strategy](http://www.gpe.co.uk/media/kr4aocvx/social_impact_strategy_2021.pdf)  
[www.gpe.co.uk/media/kr4aocvx/social\\_impact\\_strategy\\_2021.pdf](http://www.gpe.co.uk/media/kr4aocvx/social_impact_strategy_2021.pdf)

UN Sustainable Development Goal



1. Where planning allows



The Time is Now

**We are decarbonising  
our business to  
become net zero  
by 2030**





# We are decarbonising our business to become net zero by 2030

## Reduce energy intensity by 40% across our occupied portfolio by 2030

By working with our customers to improve energy efficiency, we will continue to target a reduction in energy intensity across our portfolio by 40% by 2030, from our 2016 baseline. The use of NABERS UK across our developments and existing buildings, combined with the use of the latest technology to monitor and manage energy will support the energy efficient operation of our buildings. Nature-based solutions will be used to support passive solar shading where appropriate to the asset.

## Reduce our carbon intensity by 69% across our occupied portfolio by 2030

We will continue to target a reduction in carbon intensity across our portfolio of 69% by 2030 from our 2016 baseline.

It is likely that this target will be met well ahead of 2030 due to decarbonisation of the grid. By retrofitting renewable energy solutions and through the removal of fossil fuel powered hot water and heating systems, we will continue to focus on decarbonising our business. We will use our decarbonisation fund to increase the pace of change.

We will continue to source 100% of purchased electricity and gas on zero carbon tariffs.

## Reduce our embodied carbon by 40% by 2030 across our new build developments and major refurbishments

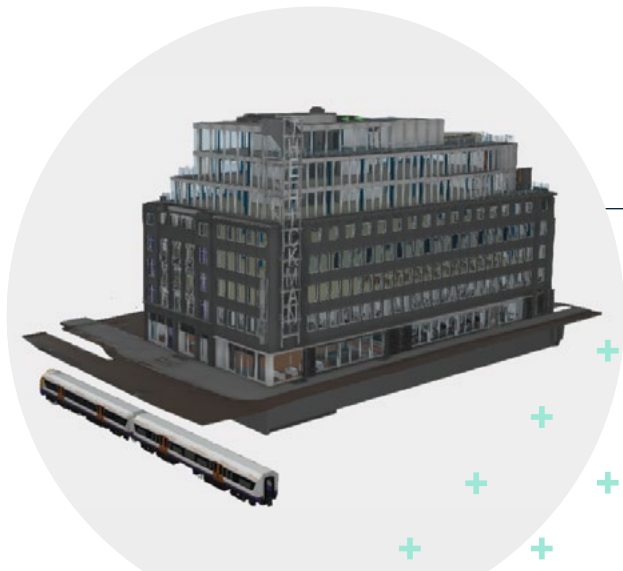
We have made good progress reducing the embodied carbon of our new build developments and major refurbishments. We will continue to target a reduction of 40% by 2030 (from our 2020 baseline). We will do this by using the latest technology and alternative materials, applying considered design, and using efficient construction techniques and circular economy principles.

We will monitor and reduce the embodied carbon of our fit outs to reduce emissions associated with the creation of our fitted and fully managed spaces.

## Become a net zero carbon business by 2030, offsetting residual carbon only once preceding measures have been addressed

We will disclose our annual progress against our net zero carbon roadmap and plot an energy intensity reduction trajectory for each building.

We will offset residual carbon once all other measures have been addressed and provide transparency on the quantity and type of offsets chosen.



At The Hickman we have created a digital twin to support improved information on the efficient operation of the building.

 **Our Roadmap to Net Zero**  
[www.gpe.co.uk/media/jopd1yjk/nzcr\\_2021.pdf](http://www.gpe.co.uk/media/jopd1yjk/nzcr_2021.pdf)



**UN Sustainable Development Goal**







The Time is Now

We are putting  
health and wellbeing  
front and centre





# We are putting health and wellbeing front and centre

## Integrate wellbeing considerations into the design of our spaces

We are integrating wellbeing measures to create flexible, inclusive and accessible spaces that benefit the wellbeing of our customers and the community.

Where practical, we create outdoor space to provide opportunities for social interaction, access to nature and increase biodiversity net gain.

## Support improved external air quality across our portfolio and communities

In partnership with our supply chain and customers we are seeking to improve air quality.

During construction, careful consideration is given to logistics strategies, minimising traffic movements and the selection of construction plant and equipment.

When buildings are in use, we will work with our customers and external partners to review opportunities for consolidation of deliveries. By working together, and by investing in local community spaces we will help mitigate any negative impact on external air quality and look to improve it where possible.

## Manage and monitor indoor air quality for the health and wellbeing of our customers

Through proactive design, management and maintenance of our building systems we will ensure good internal air quality for our customers.

Our air quality sensors will monitor performance, allowing us to provide information to our customers.

During the fit out process, we are maximising access to natural light, creating inclusive amenity spaces and prioritising repurposing of furniture whilst specifying fixtures and fittings with low VOC content.

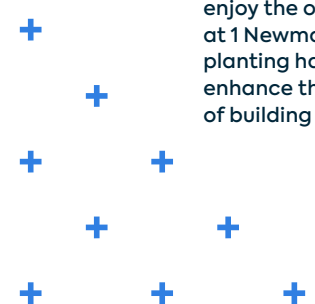
## Promote initiatives to support the health and wellbeing of our people, customers and supply chain partners

We continue to promote health and wellbeing programmes for our stakeholders:

- In our buildings, by facilitating regular health and wellbeing events for our customers, retrofitting cycle storage facilities where possible and by providing access to staircases to promote increased physical activity
- Through our Health and Wellbeing Impact Group for our employees
- By championing mental and physical health initiatives through our supply chain
- By working with community organisations that promote and maintain access to local green spaces to support improved health and wellbeing.



Uli Aviles Lopez and Saycha Thomalla enjoy the outside terrace space at 1 Newman Street. Extensive planting has been incorporated to enhance the health and wellbeing of building occupants.



- Creating Sustainable Spaces Brief**  
[www.gpe.co.uk/documents/sustainable-spaces-brief](http://www.gpe.co.uk/documents/sustainable-spaces-brief)
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**UN Sustainable Development Goal**



The Time is Now

**We are creating  
a lasting positive  
social impact in  
our communities**





# We are creating a lasting positive social impact in our communities

## Create at least £10 million of social value in our local communities by 2030 and improve access to nature

Through the continued implementation of our Social Impact Strategy and by maintaining long-term community relationships, we will create at least £10 million of social value by 2030 and disclose our progress against this target annually.

Recognising the positive impact of nature on the climate resilience of our London boroughs and the health and wellbeing of our local communities, we are prioritising access to nature for our communities, customers, supply chain and employees.

## Support charitable and non-profit organisations that challenge inequality, and tackle health and wellbeing

We are supporting improved social mobility through relationships with charitable and non-profit organisations focused on improving the quality of life for disadvantaged Londoners.

Through our support of organisations working to alleviate fuel poverty and improved climate resilience we will continue to prioritise a just transition for our local communities to a low carbon economy.

## Champion diverse skills and accessible employment opportunities

The built environment sector offers diverse and rewarding career paths. We are supporting programmes that open doors for under represented groups from our community to encourage a more diverse workforce for the future. This includes apprenticeships and employability programmes.

Working with our supply chain partners we will ensure that those working at our buildings and developments earn the London Living Wage.

We will use our Supplier Code of Conduct to improve understanding of our responsible business practices across our supply chain.

## Support the growth of local business and social enterprise

We will evaluate the broader social and environmental impacts in our procurement of products and services.

Through this process we are identifying micro, small and medium local businesses and social enterprises that we can support through our spaces.

We will report on our progress as we increase annual spend with social enterprises and local businesses.



Pippa O'Flynn repurposes and upcycles furniture as part of our 2022 Community Day working with Groundwork London.

 **Our Social Impact Strategy**  
[www.gpe.co.uk/media/kr4oocvx/social\\_impact\\_strategy\\_2021.pdf](http://www.gpe.co.uk/media/kr4oocvx/social_impact_strategy_2021.pdf)



**UN Sustainable Development Goal**





# Glossary

## Amenity Space

A space provided for the use of building occupants for recreational or social uses.

## Biodiversity Net Gain

Overall increase in habitat and/or quality of a natural environment. Provides targeted improvements of biodiversity and societal benefits. Biodiversity net gain is measured using Defra's Biodiversity Metric 2.0.

## Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP)

A not for profit charity that runs a global disclosure system for investors, companies, cities, states and regions to manage their environmental impacts.

## Carbon Intensity

Carbon intensity is calculated by multiplying the energy intensity figure by the appropriate greenhouse gas conversion factor appropriate for the fuel type.

## Carbon Risk Real Estate Monitor (CRREM)

The Carbon Risk Real Estate Monitor (CRREM) provides the real estate industry with transparent, science-based decarbonisation pathways for assets aligned with the Paris Climate Goals of limiting global temperature rise to 2°C, with ambition towards 1.5°C.

## Climate Resilience

Climate resilience is the ability to anticipate, prepare for, and respond to hazardous events, trends, or disturbances related to climate. The illustration on page 6 comes from the Better Buildings Partnership Climate Resilience Guide and sets out what a Climate Resilient business requires.

## Circular economy

Ensures waste is designed out, materials are reused and natural systems are regenerated. Circular economy principles include designing for longevity, adaptability, standardisation etc.

## Consolidation Centre

A consolidation centre is a storage facility where small shipments are combined into larger and more economical truckloads bound for a similar destination to reduce delivery movements.

## Embodied carbon

The greenhouse gas emissions emitted through the life cycle stages of a building. These include building material extraction and processing, transportation, construction, maintenance stages and final demolition of a building.

## Energy Intensity

The energy consumption of our buildings expressed as kWh/m<sup>2</sup>.

## Fitwel

A building ratings system focused on health and wellbeing.

## Fuel poverty

Occurs when a household must spend a high proportion of their income to keep their home at a reasonable temperature. At an adequate temperature their associated costs would leave them with a residual income below the official poverty line. The primary causes of fuel poverty are low incomes, high energy bills and energy inefficient homes.

## Grid decarbonisation

The ongoing movement towards powering the UK electricity grid from renewable energy sources, reducing the reliance on fossil fuels.

## Just transition

A transition to a low carbon economy where considerations of equity and fairness are embedded.

## Life-Safety Back up systems

Typically generators that are used to power essential systems such as fire alarms and emergency lighting systems in the event of a power outage.

## Living roofs

A living roof is a roof that is partially or completely covered with planting.

## London Living Wage

An hourly rate of pay, set annually by the Living Wage Commission and calculated to reflect the high cost of living in the capital.

## Materials passports

A document consisting of all the materials that are included in a product or construction to support circular use of building materials, products and components.

## Micro business

A small business employing less than ten people and with less than €2 million turnover.

## Modern Slavery

Modern slavery is defined as the recruitment, movement, harbouring or receiving of children, women or men through the use of force, coercion, abuse of vulnerability, deception or other means for the purpose of exploitation.

## NABERS UK

A rating system for the energy efficiency of office buildings, it includes both Design for Performance and Energy for Offices rating schemes.

## Nature-based solutions

Actions to protect, sustainably manage and restore natural ecosystems, that address societal challenges, whilst simultaneously providing health and biodiversity benefit.



## Glossary continued

### Net zero carbon

When carbon emissions are balanced to be zero or negative with the balance emissions that are either offset or sequestered.

A building must be highly energy efficient, powered from on-site or off-site renewable energy, with any remaining balance offset.

### Occupied portfolio

We define our occupied portfolio as those buildings that are let and occupied by our customers.

### Passive cooling

Where the building design and materials are used to control temperature in hot weather, this can include shading, tree planting and the installation of blinds.

### Renewable Energy

The on-site self-generation or purchase of off-site renewable energy sourced from but not limited to, solar, wind, hydro and geothermal technology.

### RIBA stage

The RIBA Plan of Work organises the process of briefing, designing, constructing and operating building projects into eight stages and explains the stage outcomes, core tasks and information exchanges required at each stage.

### Social Value

The UK Green Building Council states that in the context of the built environment, social value is created when buildings, places and infrastructure support environmental, economic and social wellbeing, and in doing so improve the quality of life of people.

### Social enterprise

A business which aims to make a profit, but which uses its profits to generate positive social value and impact in line with its Memorandum of Arts. Social Enterprises also have asset locks in place to ensure all assets are used to further their social objectives. This is achieved through, for example, reinvesting profits into the business to fund their own activities or donating to an external partner organisation.

### Supplier Code of Conduct

Our code of conduct that our suppliers must adhere to. This can be found on our website.

### Sustainable drainage systems

Designed to manage stormwater locally, as close to source as possible, to mimic natural drainage and encourage infiltration, attenuation and passive treatment.

### Task Force on Climate-Related Financial Disclosures

A framework to help public companies and other organisations more effectively disclose climate-related risks and opportunities through their existing reporting processes. It is mandatory in the UK for public listed companies to make a disclosure in line with this framework in their annual report and accounts.

### Transitional Risk

In the context of climate change, transition risk is the inherent business risk associated with the move towards a low carbon economy. These risks can include regulatory, market risks and reputational risks.

### Urban heat island effect

An urban area that is significantly warmer than its surrounding rural areas due to human activities, buildings, pavements, roads, traffic all contribute to this effect.

### VOC

Volatile Organic Compounds are often found in household products, paints, varnishes and other finishes used for furniture, these chemicals can have an impact on health and wellbeing of building occupants.

### WELL Building Standard

A rating system for measuring, certifying and monitoring aspects of the built environment that could impact human health and wellbeing.

### Zero carbon tariffs

Where no carbon emissions are produced from the process of the energy being generated, e.g. wind, nuclear and solar.

**Great Portland Estates plc**

33 Cavendish Square  
London W1G 0PW

Tel: 020 7647 3000

[www.gpe.co.uk](http://www.gpe.co.uk)

