

# magenta

# 10

**YEAR  
REPORT**





A thank you for  
frontline workers  
in the built  
environment

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# INTRO

BY CATHY HAYWARD

In 2011, shortly after I set up Magenta, I wrote a blog called 'In Defence of the Office' about how people feel when they're asked to work flexibly.

I talked about how many people struggle, finding that without the structure of day-to-day office life, they can't manage their time properly, can't discipline themselves to work and get distracted by domestic life. And they find, because perhaps they haven't got to grips with the new technology, that they can't locate important files or connect to that key person. They find that without the workplace they can't work – or at least not as well.

I finished by discussing what people miss most about office life. "They missed the possibilities that office life provides in abundance: to chat or not to chat; to have a quick impromptu meeting; to pop out at lunch with someone; or for a drink after

work; to bump into colleagues in other departments or get the chance for that talk in the lift with the big boss over from the US. That's office life and when we dismiss the office as being something a bit naff and rather yesterday, we forget the essential role it fulfils as a social, as well as a work, hub."

I could have written that blog yesterday. In the past 10 years – as well as the past 18 months – we've gone full circle. We've discovered, thanks to the pandemic, that we can work anywhere we want to, but actually the workplace is a really rather good place to be. Perhaps not all of the time, but certainly some of it.

As offices slowly start filling up again, we've also realised the people we've been missing. Not just our colleagues who we've seen regularly on Zoom, but the people who make our workplaces work. The cleaners, security officers, maintenance engineers and catering teams. These are the people who continued keeping our offices safe and secure throughout Covid when we were working safely at home.

There's been plenty in the press about Covid raising the importance of the role of workplace. And that's obviously good for our sector. But let's not forget the people who make our workplace work so smoothly and make sure we take time to thank them as we walk through those office doors again.

WE'VE DISCOVERED, THANKS TO THE PANDEMIC, THAT WE CAN WORK ANYWHERE



YEARS  
anta  
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# NEWS

BY JO SUTHERLAND & SHAHLIA NELSON-ROGERS

**The past 18+ months, and the past half-decade more broadly, have driven immense change across the built environment. The pandemic, Brexit, and the climate crisis are reshaping international agendas and fuelling innovation.**

In construction, the price of key materials has continued to rise<sup>[1]</sup> in response to a confluence of factors, including increased demand during the pandemic, poor growing conditions for timber in Scandinavia, and a sharp rise in shipping costs – all of which have placed further pressure on an industry already suffering from a skills shortage that Brexit threatens to exacerbate. But the outlook isn't all bad; the incredible rate of digital transformation during the pandemic includes the growth of PropTech in construction. For some years, construction has ranked among the world's least tech-enabled sectors. Concepts such as

digital twins,<sup>[2]</sup> virtual models of buildings used to study performance and simulate potential improvements, are helping to change that and may even play a crucial role in the UK meeting its 2050 net zero goal.

Supply chains are facing disruption. By the middle of August, almost one in five businesses in the manufacturing industry changed suppliers or found alternative solutions to get the materials, goods or services they needed.<sup>[3]</sup>

1. [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1007521/21-cs8\\_-\\_Construction\\_Building\\_Materials\\_-\\_Commentary\\_July\\_2021.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1007521/21-cs8_-_Construction_Building_Materials_-_Commentary_July_2021.pdf)
2. Evolution 4.0: Digital twins and the future of urban management (rics.org)
3. Business insights and impact on the UK economy - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)
4. Sixth Assessment Report — IPCC
5. New report: the building and construction sector can reach net zero carbon emissions by 2050 | World Green Building Council (worldgbc.org)
6. GDP monthly estimate, UK - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)

This year also brought the release of the IPCC's Sixth Assessment Report<sup>[4]</sup> which states the role of humans in climate change unequivocally. While there is little novel in the report, the move away from cautious language to more definitive terms in its summary for policy makers demonstrates an international drive for climate action. With buildings and construction accounting for 39% of all carbon emissions worldwide,<sup>[5]</sup> the pressure on the built environment to take action for sustainability will only grow.

Though the pandemic seems to be coming to an end, new variants continue to make the situation unpredictable.

Meanwhile, both the construction and productions sector output have fallen in recent months. Services continue to be the main contributor to the UK's GDP recovery. Administrative and support service activities have contributed 0.1 percentage points to GDP growth.<sup>[6]</sup>



**39%**

Buildings and  
construction  
account for 39%  
of all carbon  
emissions  
worldwide



## HYBRID WORKING

One of the major themes making headlines in the workplace sector is the move to – or aversion to – hybrid working practices. Some business leaders are determined that remote working cannot be adopted, including Goldman Sachs, CEO and chairman David Solomon, who called it an “aberration”.<sup>[7]</sup> Apple’s hybrid working plan faced a backlash from employees,<sup>[8]</sup> while some companies are considering restricting pay to remote workers.<sup>[9]</sup> Yet a hybrid working model has a lot to offer the businesses willing to embrace it.<sup>[10]</sup>

## CHANGING THE FACE OF CRE

Hybrid working has implications across every sector. The BBC reports that of the UK’s biggest 50 employers, almost all intend to implement remote working in some form,<sup>[11]</sup> meaning corporate real estate could look very different in the near future.

The PropTech industry is booming while changing demand drives innovation. From occupancy sensors to space booking systems,



7. The CEO Of Goldman Sachs Called Remote Work An Aberration—Here’s Why His Employees May Disagree (forbes.com)
8. Is Apple In Trouble With Its Hybrid Work Model? (forbes.com)
9. Pay cut: Google employees who work from home could lose money | Reuters
10. 5 Proven Benefits Of Remote Work For Companies (forbes.com)
11. No full-time return to the office for over a million - BBC News

technology is allowing sites to respond more effectively to demand. Services and facilities can be controlled in response to fluctuations in footfall and data collection can help to predict occupancy patterns. Cleaning and ventilation are being used to keep spaces safe. In





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the longer-term, site-use measurements can be used to steer more efficient energy usage, particularly important as heating, cooling and lighting in buildings account for 28% of carbon emissions globally.<sup>[12]</sup>

As hybrid working becomes the norm, the way space is used will also change. Workplace design will need to focus even more on agile working and facilitating in-office tasks. Companies including Google and Microsoft are leading the way in these changes.<sup>[13]</sup>

As companies move away from dedicated workstations, areas may be designed for more community events and activities to promote the collaboration that remote work can disrupt. Some designers are also interested in pop-up retail and shared networking spaces that will tempt employees into the office by focusing on the workplace as an experience. This could be a lifeline for businesses reliant upon office trade.

## CHANGING THE WAY WE COMMUNICATE

The pandemic forced many companies to switch to remote working virtually overnight. For many teams, this meant moving meetings and teamwork over to video calls. While these platforms will undoubtedly play a significant role in the future, they won't stand alone. Video calls amplify pre-existing workplace dynamics so that, often, only the loudest voices are heard. There are many creative platforms available for synchronous and asynchronous collaboration but some of the more traditional industries may take some time to change their ways.

12. New report: the building and construction sector can reach net zero carbon emissions by 2050 | World Green Building Council ([worldgbc.org](http://worldgbc.org))

13. The Impact Of A Hybrid Work Environment On Real Estate ([forbes.com](http://forbes.com))

14. How to ensure cybersecurity as staff return from home (with dodgy devices) - Raconteur

15. hybrid working | KPMG | remote working | work from home ([britsafe.org](http://britsafe.org))

16. Company Culture Doesn't Just Impact Well-Being — It Also Impacts Productivity ([forbes.com](http://forbes.com))


17. The Profit Power of Corporate Culture - HBS Working Knowledge

18. How Important Is Culture Fit For Employee Retention? ([forbes.com](http://forbes.com))

While the move to increasingly online collaborative work has the potential to spark creativity, it can also make companies vulnerable to cybersecurity threats. Predictably, 2020 saw many businesses – particularly small businesses that had not invested in cybersecurity – struggle with threats.<sup>[14]</sup> While threat numbers are dropping as working practices fall back into a regular pattern, cybersecurity is likely to see a boon in coming years.

## HOLDING ON TO COMPANY CULTURE

Hybrid working can expand talent pools to produce more diverse and skilled teams. However, for those rarely in the office, it can be difficult to engage with company culture. A poll from the Royal Society for Public Health found that 67% of remote workers felt less connected to their colleagues.<sup>[15]</sup> Building relationships, training new staff, and working collaboratively can all be challenging online, even with well-integrated workplace tech. Company culture influences productivity,<sup>[16]</sup> profit,<sup>[17]</sup> and talent retention<sup>[18]</sup> – so a hybrid culture will have to look different. Engaging virtually can be more difficult and

The background is a dark, mottled grey surface with a rough, stone-like texture. Scattered across this surface are approximately 40-50 small, colorful paper airplanes. The airplanes are in various colors: blue, yellow, red, and green. They are oriented in different directions, some pointing towards the top, some towards the bottom, and some in between. The lighting is soft, creating subtle shadows and highlights on the paper and the surface.

Workplace design will need to  
focus even more on agile working  
and facilitating in-office tasks.  
Companies including Google and  
Microsoft are leading the way.





National  
Portrait  
Gallery

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HRH THE DUCHESS OF CAMBRIDGE  
NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY

HOLD STILL

A PORTRAIT OF OUR NATION IN 2020  
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too many video calls place employees at risk of “Zoom fatigue”. Hybrid corporate cultures will be as unique as the companies themselves and each organisation and team will need to find the style and balance that best suits them. The coming months will be a time for trial and error and for listening to feedback from teams.

## DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION IN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

### Diversity in design

While hybrid work and office redesign offer the opportunity to promote greater workplace diversity, there is a long way to go, starting with the very fabric of the environment. The Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) reports that women represent only 15%<sup>[19]</sup> of more than 134,000 members globally. As highlighted by Maimunah Mohd Sharif, Executive Director of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme<sup>[20]</sup> and Sadie Morgan OBE, founding director of Property Week, design without diverse experience and expertise cannot lead to inclusive spaces.

The space around buildings also needs to be considered.

PPE shortages during the first wave of the pandemic served to demonstrate how precautions can fail. From creating accessible and well-lit spaces to improving ventilation, the design of the built environment is crucial in making it accessible to everyone while keeping them safe. The move to hybrid working and increasing pressure to meet sustainability goals are prompting refits and novelty in design. Now is the perfect time to start designing for diversity too.

### Inclusive teams

Many in the built environment and facilities industries were unable to work from home during the pandemic. Higher earners were more likely to be able to work from home and with ethnicity- and gender-based pay gaps still prevalent, this tended to put women and minorities at more risk on the frontline. Women also took the brunt of global job losses during the pandemic. The

data shows that 77% of the 3 million UK workers in ‘high-risk’ jobs are women.<sup>[21]</sup>

The job market is particularly turbulent as the world readjusts. RICS UK FM Market Survey reports demand for FM services is creating opportunity<sup>[22]</sup> but it is yet to be seen whether organisations will use this to boost their workplace diversity. In many service industries, diversity is no problem in entry level roles but, moving up the company, backgrounds rapidly become less varied. The most powerful way to do this is to promote diversity at board level.

A poll from the Royal Society for Public Health found that

**67%**

**of remote workers felt less connected to their colleagues**

19. Construction reports - Designing Buildings Wiki

20. Ibid.

21. Gender and Covid-19: the immediate impact the crisis is having on women | British Politics and Policy at LSE

22. Results of the RICS UK Facilities Management Survey

# 2022

## – A YEAR FOR CHANGE IN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT?

BY SIMON IATROU

A common criticism of built environment professions, especially facilities management, is that progress is slow. What's often framed as change, new or innovative, isn't. Lots of supposedly new concepts are old ones repackaged with new labels.

Having had this thought, I came across a quote by the American novelist Mark Twain: "There is no such thing as a new idea. It is impossible. We simply take a lot of old ideas and put them into a sort mental kaleidoscope... The same old pieces of coloured glass that have been in use through all the ages." So maybe it's not an issue unique to FM. Maybe there's something innate in the way we recycle old ideas.

In 2021, it's not uncommon to hear the phrase "FM (or workplace) is all about people" presented as groundbreaking, perspective-changing thought. I heard that maxim when I started writing about the built environment 12 years ago – before Magenta's founding. People more experienced than I am have assured me that they heard it long before that.

What about modern buzzwords like productivity, wellbeing and employee experience? Are these new ideas? Not really. Office furniture company Herman Miller was exploring these concepts 50 years ago – just not in those words. In his seminal work *A Facility Based on Change*, Herman Miller

employee Robert Propst, inventor of the flexible, modular Action Office, wrote: "The office, then, primarily should be a mind-oriented living space." According to Propst: "In theory (if not practice) this new facility would place the power in the hands of the people who actually inhabit a workspace."

Here, Propst is proposing an office design that puts employees, and specifically their psychological needs, first. Is that not employee experience?

Perhaps, though, the real issue (and the real reason we're so quick to recycle old ideas) is that, too often, we pay lip service to concepts which keeps them in a state of stasis – nice ideas for a perfect world. Think



“There is no such thing as a new idea. It is impossible. We simply take a lot of old ideas and put them into a sort mental kaleidoscope... The same old pieces of coloured glass that have been in use through all the ages.”

— MARK TWAIN



about it: facilities managers want to create environments that prioritise people's needs, but most find themselves constantly looking to cut costs in increasingly inventive ways for expectant finance managers. Likewise, corporate real estate leaders want space whose primary purpose is to improve the productivity and wellbeing of employees, but actually their number one focus is maximising office density.

## UNPRECEDENTED

We've heard the word 'unprecedented' a lot lately. Probably too often. But that's because we're living in unprecedented times. You know what they say – clichés are clichés for a reason.

Covid-19 has changed so much. It's forced us to recalibrate the way we think about the built environment – when we use buildings, how we use buildings, and even why we use them. Overnight, working from home went from a nice perk for a handful of employees to a government-sanctioned order for millions of knowledge workers and back-office employees.

In contrast, millions of frontline workers, including those in the gig economy whose job it is to make



deliveries, put their safety at risk to keep people alive and the economy moving.

The pandemic is a genuine catalyst for change. Organisations have had to centre employee experience, especially in terms of wellbeing. We've had to find new ways to keep employees

safe but still productive. We've had to redesign space to mitigate the spread of a deadly virus, but this has forced us to confront a long-ingrained culture of presenteeism. In the future, it's unlikely that sick employees will shrug their shoulders and head to the office in the future, putting colleagues at risk.

In recent months, both the British Council for Offices and the Royal Academy of Engineering have stressed the need for organisations to improve the air quality in buildings through better ventilation. This would help tackle the next virus, but numerous surveys undertaken since the pandemic began to suggest employees now also expect it.

But it's not just about the physical environment. The pandemic has also forced us to reevaluate certain intangibles, such as the role of buildings and workplaces in modern work and why people use them. Lots of recent news items suggest that most employers and employees want to maintain higher levels of remote working once the pandemic ends, but they also understand an office's power as a place to bring people together and build culture. Even then, we can't forget the people who have learned during the pandemic that they need office space to get work done.

There is plenty of evidence to suggest that we're also taking sustainability more seriously. Studies have shown that, as consumers, we're now making more environmentally friendly, sustainable and ethical choices. When the world came to a

grinding halt in March 2020, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions dropped by record levels. This demonstrated the potential impact of climate action but also the scale of the challenge to get there. It requires wholesale changes to our way of life.

The pandemic demonstrated the potential to tackle climate change, but also the significant challenge and change needed to get there. It requires a huge shift. There's an opportunity for more ambitious environmental action.

Finally, Covid-19 allowed FM to showcase why it's so critical to the health and productivity of the public and the broader economy. Why it's so important to business and people. But it's down to the FM sector to seize the moment and keep the momentum.

## WHAT IF NOTHING CHANGES?

A failure to capitalise on this moment could be catastrophic. As we head into Winter months the threat of Covid further increases. Even in Europe, where deaths and hospitalisations are down, there's still the uncertainty about new vaccine-resistant variants and possible winter

surges. Many scientists have warned that the next pandemic could be even worse, demanding a much more organised, collaborative global response.

While Covid-19 is still likely to be a once-in-a-lifetime event, it may also be a sign of things to come. We are told to expect more volatility from social, political and environmental change. In August, the UN's latest Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change announced a "code red" for humanity, warning of an increase in extreme heatwaves, droughts and flooding. Meanwhile, in the UK, a combination of soaring energy prices and Brexit has caused havoc to the country's supply chains, creating an alarming shortage of CO<sub>2</sub> for packaging foods and lorry drivers in a matter of weeks.

Do nothing and supply chains may not be able to take the strain of more disruption. The built environment needs to find ways to become more resilient, agile and adaptable. This goes for the supply chains on which it's built, but also for the people, workplace and real estate strategies that will become so important over the coming years. This means real change.

We asked 500 people about their experience of work and the workplace. The respondents were from all industries and sectors.

**Where do you work from most during an average week?**

At the time of our poll, the majority of respondents (51%) were still working from home despite all restrictions lifting in June. 44% of respondents were working from the office. However, it must be noted that this includes frontline workers who never had the option to work remotely. The next most popular option was co-working spaces but only 6.8% worked in these areas and fewer than 5% of respondents worked in public spaces such as coffee shops.

Women were more likely than men (42% compared to 33%) to be based at their company office during the week.

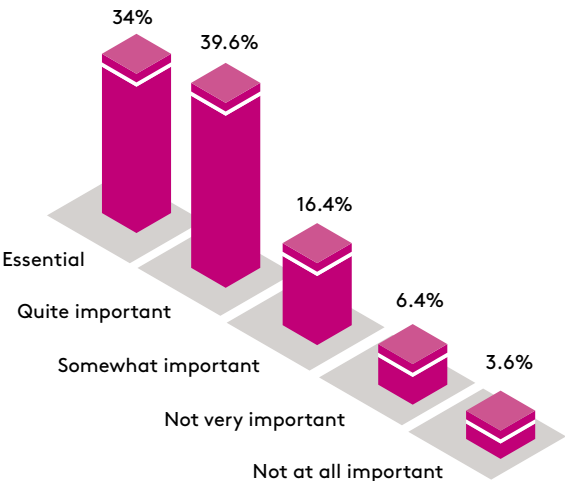
**How important is your workplace to your productivity and overall job satisfaction?**

The vast majority of respondents (75%) believe that the workplace is “essential” or “quite important” to productivity and job satisfaction. This preference is similar across genders and age groups although those in the 18-20 years age group were slightly less likely to report that the workplace is “essential” and more likely to say that it is “somewhat important”. This may be because their focus is on finding an entry level job in the right sector.

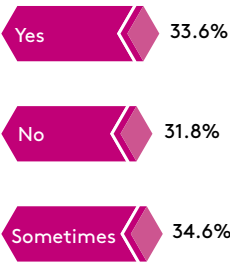
**Does your company take your opinions into account when planning workplace changes?**

When asked whether our respondents’ company takes their opinion into account when planning workplace changes, respondents were divided evenly across “no” (39%), “yes” (33%) and “sometimes” (28%). This distribution seemed to stay fairly consistent across gender and age groups except for the 18-20 age group, of whom 55% said their company did take their opinions into account.

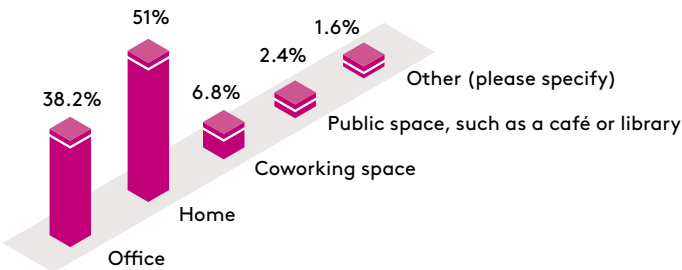
How important is your workplace to your productivity and overall job satisfaction?



Does your company take your opinions into account when planning workplace changes?



Where do you work from most during an average week?



# VIEWPOINT

PAST. PRESENT. FUTURE.

We asked four industry experts for their built environment reflections and projections. What are the biggest changes you've seen in the built environment over the last 10 years? How do you see the next 10 years evolving?



Linda Hausmanis  
CEO at Institute  
of Workplace  
and Facilities  
Management

## LINDA HAUSMANIS

As good a lens as any for a sector's evolution over time is the set of categories in an awards competition. Looking at our industry awards from then to now there are mainstays; sustainability being the stand-out; but a notable difference is in the shift to workplace experience and in facilities management from a cost to a value driven function. In a decade we have seen the rise of a people centred profession; one that recognises and values relationships as key to success: collaboration, social value, wellbeing, diversity, teamwork – all familiar themes today.

FM of the Year in 2011 was Chris Stoddart. The 2016 landmark report *The Workplace Advantage* by the Review, published in his memory, remains a beacon for demonstrating the contribution that the workplace can make to organisational success. A key

finding was that the tech-enabled workplace actually brings people together, facilitating greater levels of collaboration and innovation, underlining the very purpose of the workplace as a productivity enabler.

In 2017, just as the Institute was setting out to help FM lean into the workplace advantage, Harvard researchers were describing artificial intelligence, specifically machine learning, as the most important general-purpose technology of our time. If the mass remote-working experiment of the coronavirus pandemic has shown us anything, it is the speed of technological evolution. We continue to see its use shift from managing buildings better to creating better experiences, rapidly stretching the concept of workplace last year as millions became remote workers overnight, many quite possibly never to revert.

The mega themes of sustainability, technology and the future of work

will, by definition, continue through the 2020s; and the sector will continue to upskill in hard and soft skills, not only to close the gaping skills gap but as the regulatory and cultural environments evolve in the post EU, post Grenfell and post Covid environment.

Probably the single most important - all-encompassing - challenge, and a major opportunity, will be in using post-pandemic rethinking to achieve sustainability goals in their widest sense; people centric and values-based. The recent IPCC report's 'code red' warning is unequivocal but the way we manage and maintain our buildings can and should make a lasting contribution to carbon reduction. By collaborating to understand and catalyse the necessary change, the built environment and FM specifically can take a lead in averting catastrophe.

We will see more skilled facilities professionals continuing to make a difference by using the experience of the pandemic which has sped up changes already in train to devise integrated property or workplace user strategies that can blend a number of factors, including the future demands of a (probable) smaller office footprint, the impacts of businesses rationalising and refocusing service requirements and the changing expectations of the physical workplace as somewhere to bring people together differently than before.

## MARK ELTRINGHAM

Perhaps the two greatest myths about evolution are that all lifeforms are developing towards a single end point, and that it takes place steadily over a period of time. The truth about the second of these is that creatures evolve more quickly when they are subject to a rapidly changing environment. They evolve in the same two ways that people go bankrupt. Gradually, then suddenly, as Hemingway put it. Human history is characterised by this same punctuated approach to progress. Great advances forged in the white heat of specific times

and places, synthesising ideas from the new conditions and established knowledge.

What has happened to the workplace in the past two years has only been unprecedented in terms of its speed. None of the ideas about work and offices are new, even though some of the technology that facilitates them may be.

We've known for a long time that offices are underutilised, that they are often mediocre in design, that people crave flexibility, and that technology allows them to work remotely for at least part of the week. We know lots of things that have suddenly gone mainstream. What comes next will be fascinating. The office won't die but nor will it be unchanged. It exists in a new ecosystem now and will evolve.

Which brings us to the truth about the first great myth of evolution, that everything is converging on a single point. While we appear to have become fixated on a particular form of 'hybrid working', what will emerge from the shock of the past two years is not an ideal form of working culture for everybody, but a proliferation of cultures and places of work.



Mark Eltringham  
Publisher, Insight  
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David Emanuel  
Managing director,  
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## DAVID EMANUEL

The biggest change I've noticed in the sector over the past decade is the focus shifting steadily away from buildings themselves and more onto the people that occupy them - and increasingly over the past year, why and how we use them, too.


One of the issues with the built environment is that it serves two masters, and there has always been a fundamental conflict between them. On one hand, we have those that invest in the built environment, build it and own it; and on the other, we have those that actually use it. The former want to make the largest return on their investment, the latter want buildings to be as efficient, safe and comfortable as possible.

The change over the years has been in the realisation that the more versatile the building is and the better the facilities it offers are, the better the financial return can be.

This ultimately is about the wellbeing of those that work, live or play within these buildings. There are so many factors that can affect wellbeing and all the considerations that connect to it, including engagement and productivity, many of which are easy to take for granted or simply overlook.

At the risk of over-simplifying this, the big question is - does the building work for its occupants? Whether its lighting, acoustics, air quality, IT infrastructure, use of space or any of the innumerable elements that go into design and construction, the whole has to come together to best serve the occupants. Both the commercial property industry and FM have been surprisingly slow to take this fundamental message on-board. Happily, that has been changing, and it is probably fair to say that the change has come more quickly to FM than to the property world in general.

Most recently, the pandemic-driven work-from-home experiment has highlighted whether or not buildings are actually fit for purpose; and in many cases this has revealed that the average home often scores better than the average office. Covid has spurred us on to think even harder about how, when and



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where we use offices, and about how buildings need to change so they work better for the people who use them.

Going forward, I see big change coming in the focus on flexibility and sustainability. These have been issues for some time, of course, but I believe we will see them moving up the agenda fast in the next few years – there is really no choice about that. We'll see this in how buildings are built, rebuilt or modified and re-used, with more building work being done by robots and off-site wherever possible, too. The sustainability of materials, and in particular their energy efficiency, will be big topics, as will their flexibility in terms of modification or wholesale reuse. And all that will add up to a built environment that will adapt more easily and more successfully as life – both at work and beyond – continues to change.

Our built environment has evolved extensively over the past decade, but it will do so even more in the next: it has to if we are to face down the challenges that are already before us. I also think that the membership bodies in the sector are going to have to transform themselves, and quickly too, in order to demonstrate their value and provide the support that built environment professionals will need.

## CATHY HAYWARD

The biggest change I've seen over the past 10 years in the built environment is with technology. When I set up Magenta, the technology existed to unchain people from fixed locations, but few companies encouraged a fully flexible approach and few individuals demanded it. The pandemic forced the issue, but it was already changing before that. It will be fascinating to see the long-term impact of such a long period of home-working and how technology develops to accommodate our needs. Alongside that we've seen incredibly exciting developments in sensor technology, allowing facilities to be analysed remotely and departments and even individuals to create their own personalised comfort parameters. A decade ago, sensors were available but expensive and limited in scope. They're now ubiquitous, generally

accepted and highly sophisticated. Imagine being told in 2011 that buildings would monitor air quality continuously and could pump oxygen into the space in the afternoon to avoid the post-lunch slump. Sci-fi has become sci-fact.

In the next 10 years, I think we'll see climate action and ethical concerns top the built environment agenda. We're already seeing investment decisions made with environmental, social and corporate governance (ESG) criteria in mind, which is driving businesses to urgently address these issues. We all know that our buildings play an enormous role in creating a more sustainable future, but I see a change in focus from reducing operational carbon to addressing embodied carbon – managing the carbon in products and buildings which has already been spent. We'll see more developers remodelling their buildings rather than knocking them down and starting again. We'll see less furniture thrown away but instead repurposed and reused. We'll see more minimalist design overall. How an organisation treats the environment, its people and the wider community will be as important as its bottom line.



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