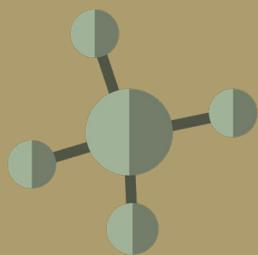


# A CLIENT GUIDE TO

THE RIBA 2030 CLIMATE CHALLENGE



# The RIBA 2030 Climate Challenge

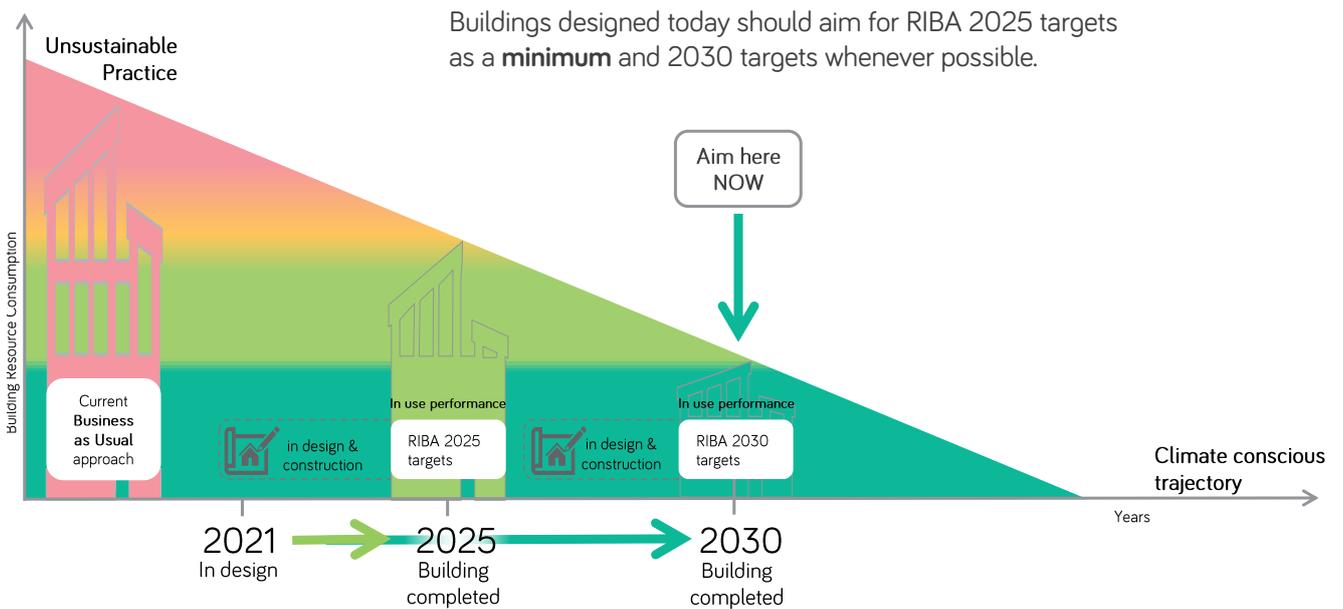
## Background

In the summer of 2019, the RIBA joined the global declaration of an environment and climate emergency. Climate change and the inequalities of its consequences are the biggest challenges facing the world today. It is vital that all sectors shoulder their responsibility to minimise their contributions to climate change and limit global warming to within 1.5°C rise. The costs of failing to do so are high.

The remaining 9 years until 2030 play a critical role in achieving this ambition, but the journey doesn't end there. Meeting the UK Government legislated net zero goal by 2050, means that the construction industry, alongside other sectors, must deliver an unprecedented programme of carbon reduction.

## The Challenge

The RIBA has developed voluntary performance targets for operational energy use, water use and embodied carbon. These performance targets have been developed in consultation with other professional UK construction bodies and align with the future legislative horizon. They set out challenging but achievable trajectory to realise significant reductions necessary by 2030 in order to have a realistic prospect of achieving net zero carbon for the whole UK building stock by 2050.



RIBA 2030 Climate Challenge as built target trajectories

# The Client's Role

As part of the RIBA's commitment to excellence and ethical practice, the Institute is promoting a radical shift in industry towards a more outcome-based approach to design. It means, championing outcomes that benefit planetary as well as human well-being; and requires placing greater emphasis on approaches that focus on tangible performance outcomes right from project outset, even prior to briefing.

Whilst the role of the architect is central to this focal shift, the role of the client is fundamental to enabling the process.

## Benefits of adopting the 2030 Climate Challenge

Adopting the voluntary targets on projects can have multiple benefits to clients. Complying with the stretching RIBA Challenge targets will require design teams to move beyond a design-to-compliance culture and focus on design co-ordination, quality control and detailed commissioning to deliver the desired outcomes. Increased levels of productivity and happiness in building users may be realised as a consequence of this the focal shift, as levels of dissatisfaction and discomfort in building occupants reduce with increased standards of building performance.

Furthermore, the business benefits include more accurate forecasting of expenditure in face of rising operating costs since targets are *performance* targets of *actual* use. In addition, reduced whole life operating costs may be realised as buildings designed to the RIBA Challenge targets are more efficient and cheaper to run compared to business-as-usual approaches. Projects may also experience reduced capital costs as the RIBA Challenge embodied carbon targets push towards leaner, more efficient designs that use less material.

## Business opportunities afforded by the 2030 Climate Challenge

The 2030 Climate Challenge targets support clients to gain greater insight and clarity of their own environmental and carbon footprint and play a role in supporting net zero business models and the role of clients' buildings within these. Implementing the 2030 Climate Challenge targets demonstrates leadership ahead of business-as-usual construction and building management approaches. It also allows clients to stay abreast of mega trends of increased societal awareness and accountability and demonstrate responsibility in face of increased customer, consumer, staff and occupier driven expectations for brand credibility.

Lastly, following the RIBA Challenge provides the opportunity for recognition of exemplar building portfolios and the associated reputational benefits. Future rounds of RIBA Awards submissions will require information on performance against the Challenge to be provided.

## Client Involvement

Currently, only RIBA Chartered Practices can sign up to the RIBA 2030 Climate Challenge. However, the targets themselves are open source and can be used and embedded on projects or even in business plans. Capital projects are costly, and therefore doing and getting it right from the outset makes business sense. Retrofitting sustainability measures carries an increased cost compared to incorporating them from the start. Thus, embedding the RIBA Challenge targets within project briefs mitigates and removes risk of non-compliance with future regulation and future mandatory performance declaration.

Clients can further ensure that the aims of the RIBA Challenge are adopted and understood by the whole project team and should seek to mandate a collaborative design and construction process. Project teams can be incentivised to deliver to the targeted performance outcomes through contracts and employers' requirements. However, if following performance contracting route, care should be excised to identify respective spheres of influence on performance outcomes such that designers, contractors and clients themselves are assigned responsibilities and not penalised for performance outcomes outside of their control (e.g. a client decision to extend building operational hours compared to those undertaken during the design modelling is outside of the design teams' control).

# Joining the Challenge

The RIBA Challenge does not seek to replace or replicate a building environmental assessment and there is no associated RIBA Challenge certification procedure. Instead, the RIBA Challenge presents a set of performance outcome targets for projects to aim towards. With the Challenge, the RIBA seeks to encourage a shift towards outcome-based approaches to design that is forward facing.

**The RIBA therefore advocates that buildings designed today should, as a minimum, adopt the 2025 targets, since the targets specify actual performance metrics of the building in operation.**

The RIBA Climate Challenge only has two stipulations of signatories the first is to *attempt* to achieve the targets. There is no penalty or consequence for projects that miss the Challenge's voluntary performance targets. The second requirement is to *submit anonymised project data*.

## Client Commitments

Clients are therefore requested to provide actual energy and water usage data one year after project completion via the project architect to the RIBA. These figures should be taken from energy/water meter readings (or energy/water bills) for the building over a year, so that both winter and summer seasons feature in the calculation. Clients are asked to make this information available to project architects, whose responsibility it is to submit the data report.

The RIBA appreciates that some projects may be impeded in meeting the Challenge targets for a variety of reasons. Data should nevertheless be recorded and submitted. Progress towards better performance outcomes above business as usual approaches is recognised as an achievement in the right direction along the Challenge trajectory.

## Data Protection

The RIBA provides assurance that all submitted data will remain anonymous and will only be used by the RIBA to:

- a) grow industry knowledge of trends in building performance
- b) identify trends in building performance gaps between predicted design targets and actual building performance data
- c) identify opportunities for improvements for sectoral carbon reductions
- d) deliver targeted research and knowledge development to the profession
- e) inform future engagement activity for the RIBA membership