

Apt Sustainability

Our Approach

Sustainable design is not a facet or an add on, it's an integral part of our design process and ethos at Apt.

We are undergoing a paradigm shift in the way in which we approach and design our buildings which requires us to take each of our clients on a journey to understand the art of the possible. We challenge the 'business-as-usual' approach, but we also know that we cannot do this alone. We work collaboratively with the client and consultant team to find solutions and determine the best way forward for a project and planet.

In our role as architects, we have the opportunity to influence the highest quality buildings that deliver ambitious sustainability credentials. Our approach to sustainability is not limited to energy and carbon, we take a holistic view and also balance the social and economic value of the places we create.

Our Commitment to our Collective Future

Our commitments to building a better future are centred around our projects, the people we work with, and our studio. We have set out a series of ambitious commitments and timescales in which to achieve them.



Projects

01 / Net Zero Projects

02 / Explore Retention and Reuse

03 / Design with Efficiency and Elegance

04 / Design for Performance

05 / Design for Future Generations

06 / Embed Sustainability at All Stages

07 / Design for the Natural Environment

08 / Design for Sustainable Communities

09 / Adopt Post Occupancy Evaluations

10 / Advocate, Learn & Collaborate

01 / Net Zero Projects

We will record the embodied & whole life carbon of all of our projects, with an ambition to design all projects to be net zero carbon by 2050 or sooner.

Worldwide, buildings are responsible for around 40% of greenhouse gas emissions, with 27% of these emissions generated during the operation of buildings and the remaining 13% associated with construction and demolition. Understanding and reducing these emissions will be crucial to the transition to a net zero society.

As a studio we are on a journey of continuous development and learning, and the commitments outlined here represent a significant step in our contribution towards a more sustainable future.



02 / Explore Retention and Reuse

Our design hierarchy will always consider retention of any existing buildings first, followed by reuse of components onsite, with deconstruction and recycling only considered where the first two are not viable.

Creative Reuse

The first question on any project with an existing structure should be ‘how much of this can we sensibly retain?’ As architects, we help our clients inform an understanding of which existing assets should or could be retained, and how we can retrofit, extend and supplement them to produce modern, future-proofed, efficient buildings, adding value for the client, while minimising embodied carbon and securing the future of our existing built assets.

We have demonstrated significant carbon savings through retrofit and creative reuse across a number of projects:

- Integra House created 15 high-quality studio apartments just metres from Wimbledon train station. A former office building which had lain empty for some time, both façade and structure were retained, with thermal upgrades to the façade and windows to improve comfort and bring the building up to modern day standards.
- Our 81 Dean Street project retained the entire structural frame as we gave this unloved office building a new lease of life as apartments in the heart of Soho. It was re-clad with a richly layered facade containing recessed windows with juliet balconies and bronze shutters affording privacy and external shading.
- Hill House is a proposed new office building in the City of London which aims to retain almost 60% of the existing building’s structure and requires no new foundations, resulting in a considerable carbon saving when compared to a full demolition and rebuild.



03 / Design with Efficiency and Elegance

We will work collaboratively with the design team to develop the most efficient and elegant solution to each brief by testing design options to understand the optimum approach for the site in terms of embodied and whole life carbon. We will specify self-finished structural elements where suitable, and promote recycled, natural and low-carbon materials throughout.

We will include embodied carbon data when presenting design or materials options.

Aspirational Upfront and Whole Life Carbon Targets

Hill House, a 680,000 sqft office-led development in the City of London is projected to be well below the GLA's aspirational targets for both upfront and whole life carbon, targeting sub-600kgCO₂e/m². This has been achieved through an extensive carbon optioneering process and innovative design solutions working collaboratively with the wider design team.

Innovation

We strive for innovation across all of our projects and are always looking for new ways to create a more sustainable built environment. Below are some examples we have been exploring in recent projects:

- Repurposed steel columns – We have proposed using steel sections from decommissioned oil rigs to reduce the volume of concrete for the superstructure on our Hill House project. This reduces the upfront embodied carbon as well as creating an interesting internal aesthetic.
- Calcine clay cement replacements – We understand that there is a finite amount of GGBS, therefore we are proposing a far more sustainable alternative on one of our larger projects. This also has the added aesthetic benefit of turning the concrete a subtle hue of pink.



04 / Design for Performance

We will always encourage the adoption of ambitious performance targets for our projects. Across our portfolio we have experience in designing and delivering BREEAM 'Excellent' & 'Outstanding', WELL 'Gold' & 'Platinum' and NABERS 5.5 Star schemes, and we are currently working on one of Europe's largest Passivhaus projects.

At early stages on each of our projects we will discuss the ambitions for the project with the client and consultant team and compile a Sustainability Brief that will be used to track the project throughout the design and construction stages.

Europe's Largest Passivhaus

Our 2 Trafalgar Way project which is currently on site is aiming to be Europe's largest Passivhaus Certified building. Primarily housing 1672 student bedrooms and 80 apartments across three connected towers, design stage projections anticipate heating demand to be less than one fifth of our clients other recently completed buildings, with overall energy use reduced by two-thirds.

This will not only result in reduced carbon emissions, but also considerable savings in future running costs. A fully electric heating and cooling system based on air source heat pumps also future-proofs the building to take advantage of anticipated grid decarbonisation.



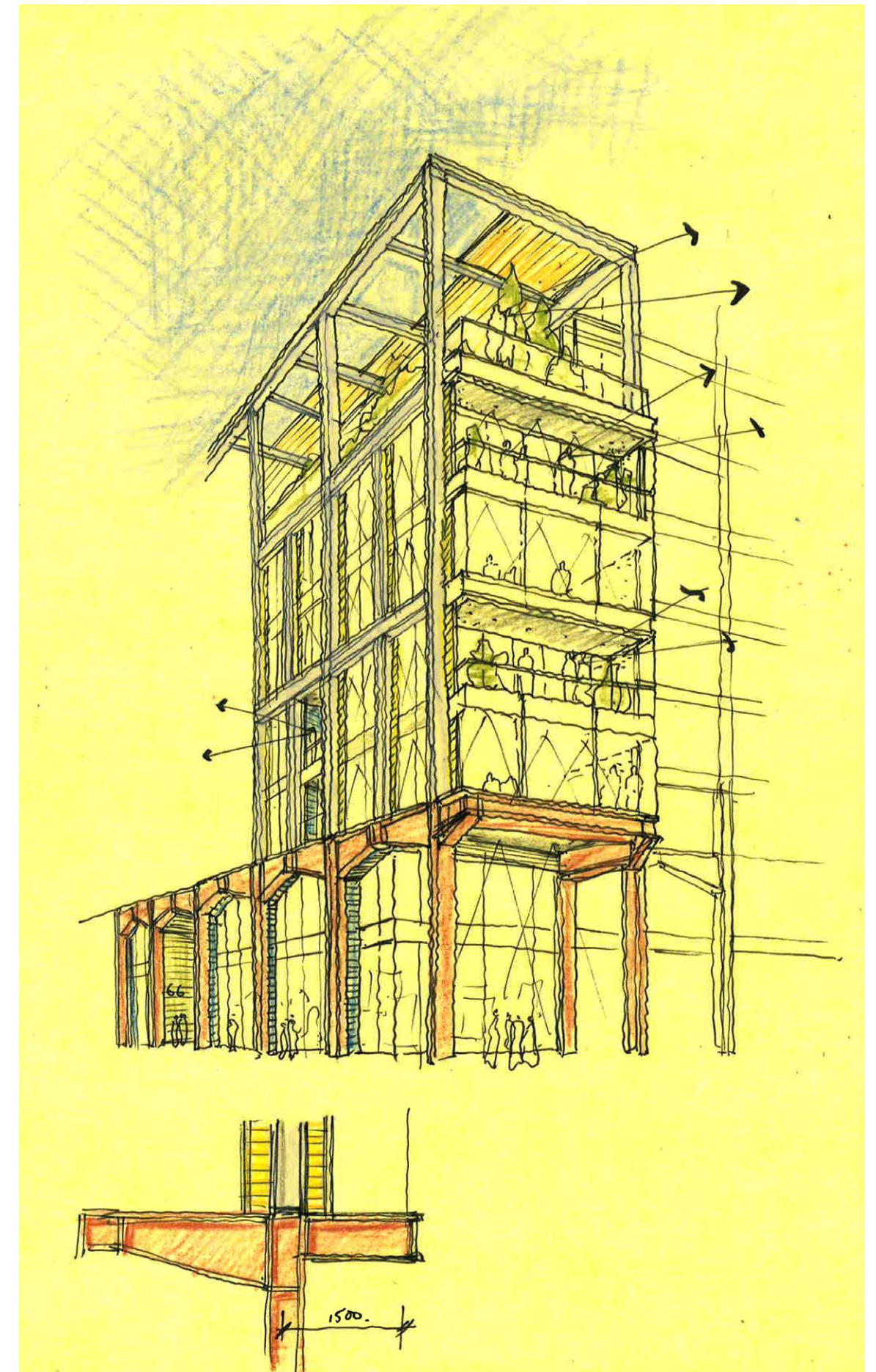
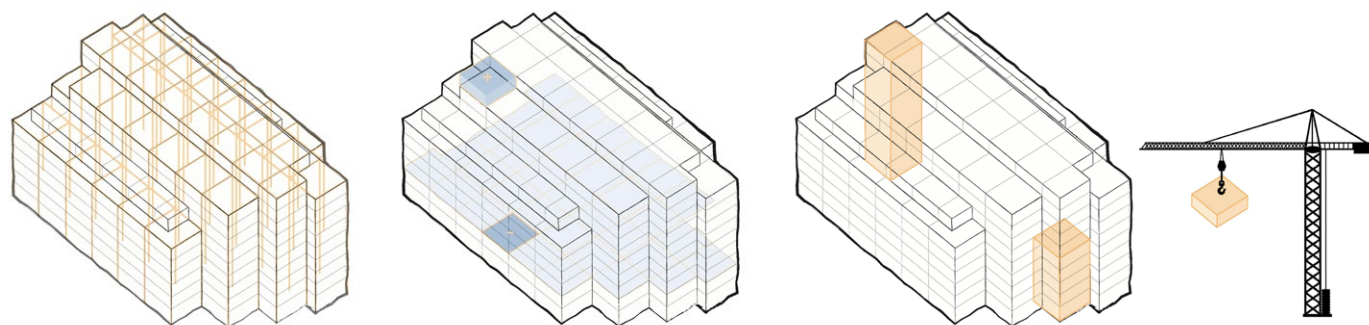
05 / Design for Future Generations

We will consider the full life cycle of our buildings throughout the design process by ensuring that options to maintain future flexibility are explored. We will consider replacement, repair and maintenance requirements in the specification of materials and design for disassembly, reuse and recycling where possible.

Putting future flexibility, adaptability, and reuse at the heart of the design

A re-interpretation of the Victorian warehouse, 66 Hammersmith Road looks to create a new generation of building which responds to rapidly evolving approaches to the workplace.

Conceived as a reconfigurable flexible volume, the floor plates are based on a simple 9m grid, with a structural exoskeleton designed to rationalise structural connection details to allow for future expansion or disassembly. Plant and toilets have been located in service columns on the buildings perimeter to give maximum freedom, and the building was designed to reuse an existing basement on site, which significantly reduces upfront carbon.



06 / Embed Sustainability at All Stages

Each of our projects will be reviewed at key stages against the [RIBA Sustainable Outcomes](#) to ensure that opportunities for sustainable design are maximised. Reviews will be conducted in-house against best practice industry guidance, with a range of consultants and industry experts invited as required to help guide and offer advice.

At Apt we take pride in our culture of collaboration and innovation, and we enjoy working with experts from across the industry. We look at each project afresh and understand that not every sustainability initiative will be appropriate for every project.

We will work with our clients and design teams to develop a Sustainability Brief tailored to the individual requirements of each project, and review against it at key stages to ensure that sustainability outcomes are maximised and deliverable.



07 / Design for the Natural Environment

In all of our projects we will aim to improve health, wellbeing and engagement with nature through the creation of well-designed green spaces. We will enhance nature, use water efficiently and improve biodiversity, exceeding minimum standards for biodiversity net gain where feasible.



08 / Design for Sustainable Communities

We always strive to create vibrant mixed-use places, prioritising the creation of high quality, inclusive buildings and public realm that help to encourage community interaction. We look to improve the permeability of sites where possible and always consider links to local amenities and the wider community. We do not have a house style and look to the existing context to help us develop designs which reinforce local identity.

Opening up connections

The Earnshaw is a highly contextual architectural response to a complex site. The introduction of a new arcade route through the middle of the site aims to increase pedestrian permeability through and around the scheme, actively improving the wider urban context and knitting together the redevelopment around Centrepont, Central St. Giles and Princes Circus.

A new urban oasis

Garden squares are a much loved feature in London's landscape, and Merchant Square provides a little something for everybody; boutiques, waterside cafés, restaurants and bars, a quiet corner to read a book or lie in the sun, kayaking on the canal, a sunset terrace to relax, and interactive fountains to lose your children in squeals of delight.



09 / Adopt Post Occupancy Evaluations

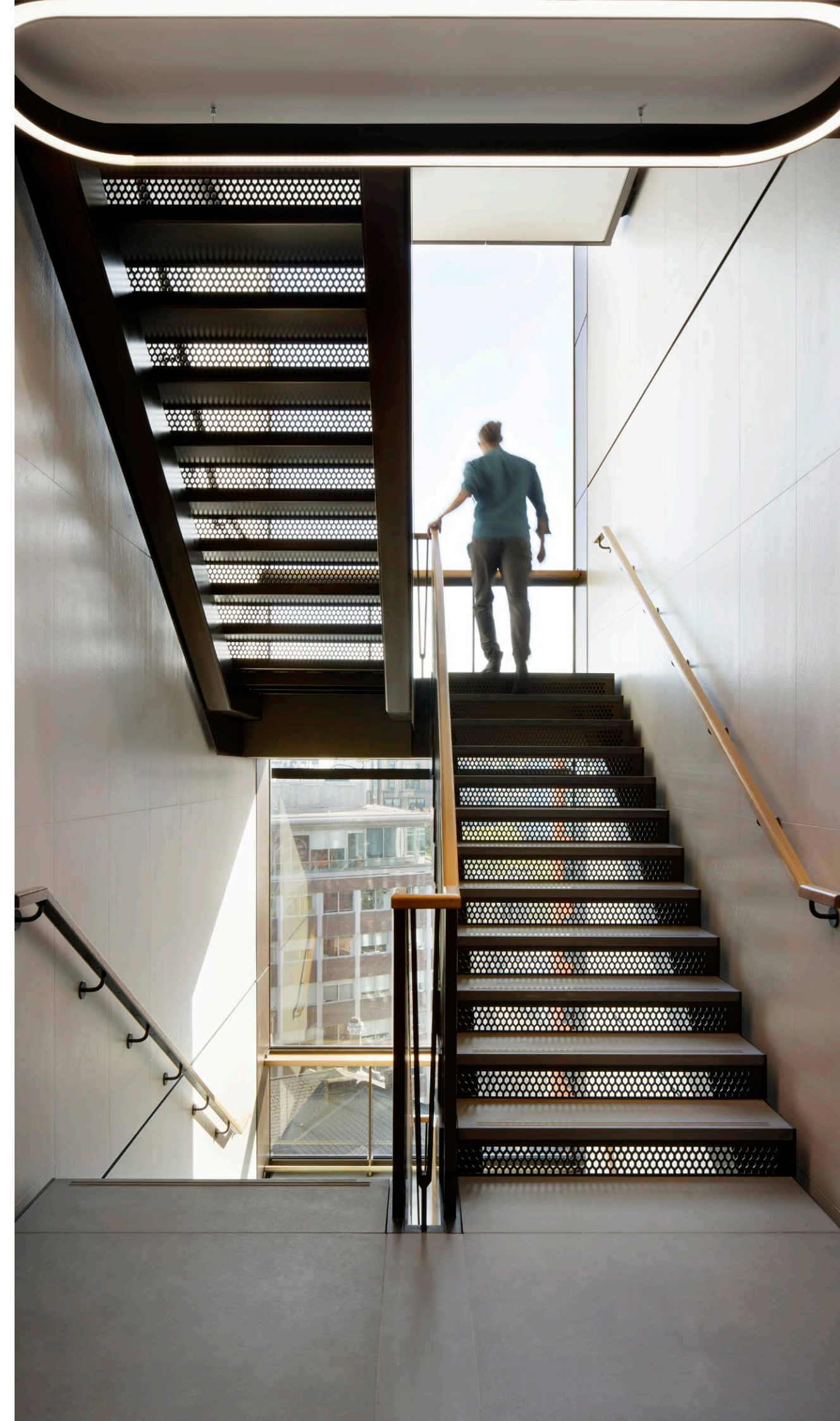
Understanding a building's performance post-occupation helps architects, and the wider industry learn and raise standards. We will offer post occupancy evaluations as a service on all of our projects.

In order to understand if our buildings are used and operated in the way we intended, we need to carry out Post Occupancy Evaluations. We understand that these can be difficult to arrange but the data gained is invaluable, and the process can be tailored to individual project and client requirements. This is of mutual benefit to both our client and the design team and will help influence future buildings and create a more sustainable built environment.

10 / Advocate, Learn & Collaborate

Our creative process is founded on a culture of collaboration and innovation, and our approach to sustainability is no different. We will continue to work with experts from across the industry, sharing knowledge through talks and CPDs and investment in staff training. We will encourage our clients and consultants to commit to ambitious sustainability targets, and advocate for higher standards across the construction industry.

We have been signatories to Architects Declare since 2019 and are currently undergoing certification to ISO 14001, an internationally recognized standard for environmental management systems. We are also beginning our journey towards certification as a B Corp.





Practice

01 / A Net Zero Studio

02 / A Zero Waste Studio

03 / An Environmentally Conscious Studio

04 / An Inclusive Profession

05 / A Diverse Studio

06 / Fair Rewards

07 / Community Engagement

08 / Business Ethics and Human Rights

01 / A Net Zero Studio

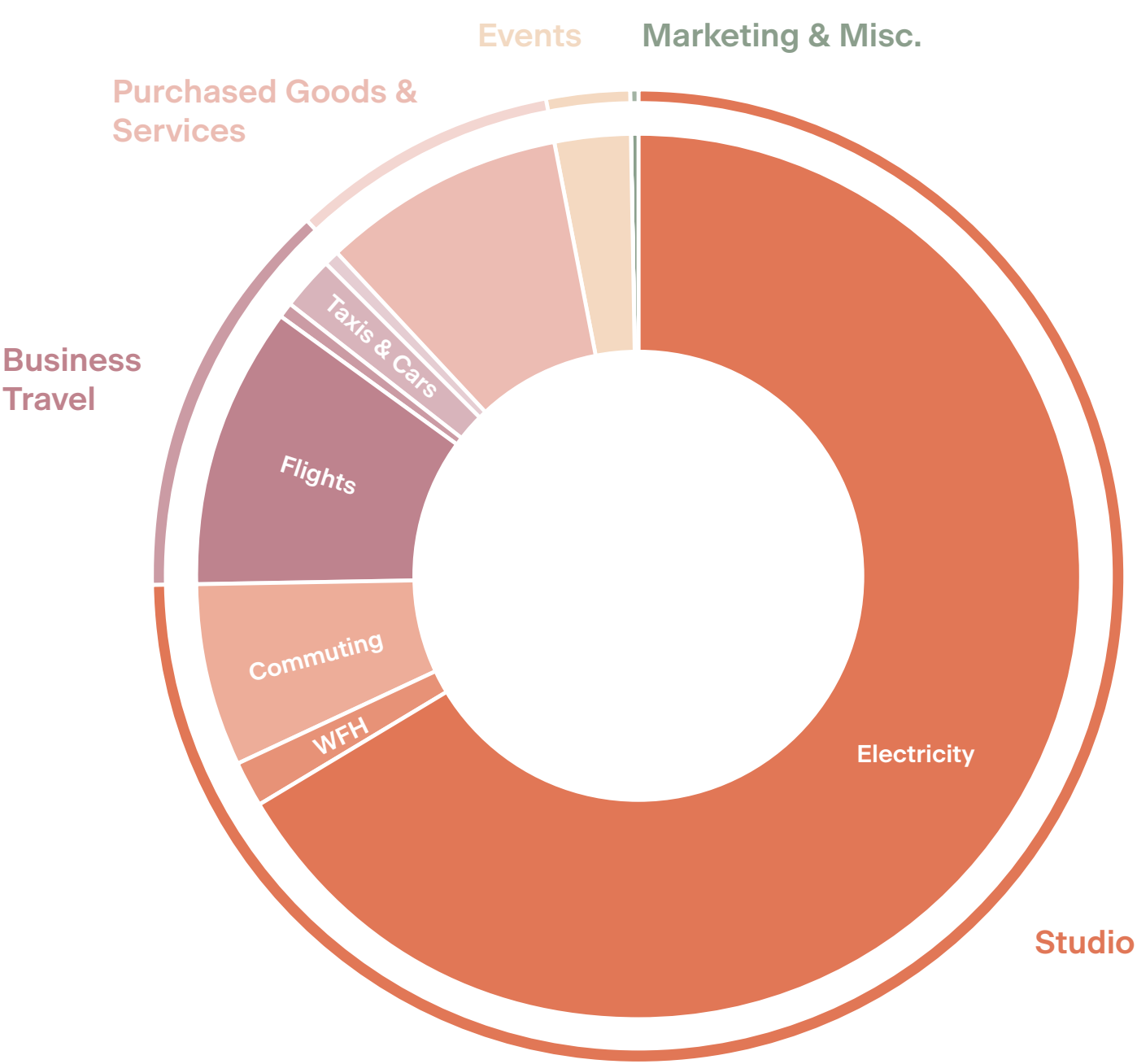
We are committing to address the environmental impact of our own activities within the studio. We will measure our operational greenhouse gas emissions annually as part of our ISO 14001 certification and set out a Carbon Reduction Plan with an aim to halve our operational emissions by 2030 and an ambition to reach net zero carbon by 2050.

Apt’s Operational Carbon

At the end of 2024 we began working with ecollective to measure our operational carbon emissions across Scopes 1, 2 & 3. In 2024 this came to just over 107 tonnes of CO₂e in total, or 2,922kg per employee.

As the breakdown opposite shows the majority of the emissions were associated with the electricity we use to heat and light our studio and to power our IT equipment, but business travel, commuting, events and purchased goods and services also contributed.

We are aiming to reduce our per employee footprint by 50% by 2030, and are currently setting out our reduction plans to achieve this.



02 / A Zero Waste Studio

As part of our commitments to reduce our impact on the environment we will operate our studio with responsible sourcing, resource efficiency and circular economy principles in mind. We will record waste generated by our studio and develop a plan to send zero waste to landfill.

03 / An Environmentally Conscious Studio

We will manage our studio's activities to minimise the risk of pollution and contamination and to support the enhancement of biodiversity wherever practicable. As part of our ISO 14001 certification, we will maintain a documented process for identifying and managing our significant environmental impacts and set out plans to reduce them.



04 / An Inclusive Profession

We support the development of more inclusive and diverse routes to practice including through the Apt Apprenticeship scheme. We have been running the apprenticeship scheme since 2021 in collaboration with London South Bank University and are supporting a number of Level 6 Architectural Apprentices through their RIBA Part 1 qualifications while they also gain valuable experience in practice.

We also run an annual work experience programme which allows students at local schools to get an insight into the day-to-day work of an architect.

05 / A Diverse Studio

Our strength is the energy, creativity and diversity of the people we work with. We encourage diversity and promote an inclusive workplace which respects the rights of all of our employees. We will never tolerate harassment or discrimination towards any of our employees and will encourage similar behaviour across the construction industry.

We will monitor and record our employee satisfaction and DEI metrics annually, and aim to encourage all of our employees, including those from under-represented groups to take up training and career development opportunities.



06 / Fair Rewards

As an Employee Ownership Trust, our structure allows us to nurture individual talent and reward collective success, providing incentive and opportunity for people to flourish. Our people are our business; it is personal.

100% of our ownership is held by our Employee Ownership Trust which allows us all to share in the success of the business through an equitable EOT bonus. We also pay all of our employees the Real Living Wage and aspire for all of our contractors and supply chain to meet the same standards.



07 / Community Engagement

As a practice we understand the importance of investing in our local communities and giving to charity. As architects it is a fundamental to contribute to the communities that co-exist with our office, and our designs.

We will seek to engage with community organisations & charities within architecture & the built environment to identify opportunities for volunteering or pro-bono work. To support the volunteering process, we will create opportunities for our employees to volunteer with a local charity organisation either inside or outside the built environment within working hours.

08 / Business Ethics and Human Rights

We are cognisant of the fact that we rely on the wider design and construction industry to help us design and deliver our buildings. We want to ensure that the highest standards of human and labour rights are respected and upheld at all times.

Apt is committed to acting ethically and with integrity in all our business relationships and taking reasonable steps to ensure that slavery and human trafficking are not taking place in any business or organisation that has a direct business relationship with our Company.



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