

COMMUNICATION ON ENGAGEMENT (COE)

Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA)

Period covered by this Communication on Engagement:

From: January 2017

To: December 2018

Part I. Statement of Continued Support by the Chief Executive or Equivalent

Please use the box below to include the statement of continued support signed by your organization's Chief Executive or equivalent.

19 December 2018

I am pleased to confirm that the RIBA reaffirms its support to the United Nations Global Compact and its Ten Principles in the areas of Human Rights, Labour, Environment and Anti-Corruption. This is our Communication on Engagement with the United Nations Global Compact. We welcome feedback on its contents.

In this Communication of Engagement, we describe the actions that our organization has taken to support the UN Global Compact and its Principles as suggested for an organization like ours. We also commit to sharing this information with our stakeholders using our primary channels of communication.

Sincerely yours,

Carys Rowlands
Head of Professional Standards
For and on behalf of the RIBA

Part II. Description of Actions

Please use the box below to describe the actions your organization has taken in support of the Global Compact. It is strongly recommended that the actions taken are related to one or more of the specific activities suggested. *Please refer to the complete list of suggested activities for your type of organization found [here](#).*

- Publication of the UN SDGs in Practice (pdf guidance for members on how and why to support and embed the SDGs in architectural practice)
- Publication of three case studies re: Ethics in Architectural Practice
- Review of the RIBA Code of Professional Conduct and Code of Practice, including raising standards of professional practice in relation to: the environment, equality, diversity & inclusion, health & safety
- Publication of Guidance on Whole Life Carbon Assessment for Architects
- Publication of report on the Ten Characteristics of Places Where People Want to Live
- Publication of Guidance on Post Occupancy Evaluation
- 2 x CPD sessions at a major event at the RIBA focussing on the SDGs and ethics
- Core CPD programme (13+ sessions nationally in 2018) on ethical sourcing
- Five Presidents Pledge: pledge by the 5 presidents of architectural institutions in the UK, including the pledge to lead the profession in the fight for a more sustainable built environment by placing the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals as a key guiding principle in all they do
- Creation of the RIBA Ethics and Sustainable Development Commission: to assert the fundamental importance of public interest, social purpose and sustainability as core values within the Profession AND to consider how the profession can best reflect its core values and engage with the UN's 2030 Sustainable Development Goals
- Final report of the RIBA Ethics & Sustainable Development Commission

All information and reports available here: <https://www.architecture.com/knowledge-and-resources/knowledge-landing-page/our-roadmap-to-drive-forward-ethics-and-sustainability-in-the-built-environment>

Part III. Measurement of Outcomes

Please use the box below to include the most relevant qualitative and/or quantitative indicators to measure the outcome of the activities described in Part II above.

- 6 key reports/guidance documents provided to RIBA members to improve expertise and knowledge which will further the aims of Global Compact Local Network in the UK (and abroad through international members)

- 335 responses received in response to the public consultation run by the RIBA Ethics and Sustainable Development Commission. 33% female respondents; 60% architect respondents; 65% UK respondents; responses from 42 different countries; 89% of respondents interested in sustainable development and the SDGs; 40% of respondents familiar with SDG 11 and the New Urban Agenda; 50% respondents consider that their organisation is contributing to implementation of the SDGs and 75% expect to engage more in future

- RIBA received letters of support from the following organisations in response to their work on ethics and sustainable development: House of Lords, UN Habitat, Foreign & Commonwealth Office, Grosvenor, Aldersgate Group, Global Alliance for Urban Crises, UIA, Lipton Rogers, IUGS, UKGBC, University of Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership, IMC Worldwide Ltd, The Edge, Article 25, The Prince's Foundation, Exploration Architecture, Architecture for Humanity UK, The Royal Institution

- RIBA Ethics and Sustainable Development Commission made 19 core recommendations to RIBA Council on 11 December 2018. These recommendations were approved by Council:

1.0 OVERARCHING AIM

On the basis of its work, the Commission invites RIBA Council to formally reassert the Institute's unequivocal commitment to placing public interest, social purpose, ethical behaviour and sustainable development at the heart of the Institute's activities and to develop a plan of action based on the UN's 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

In order to deliver this objective, the Institute needs to:

- alongside other professional bodies, provide determined leadership on ethics and sustainable development,
- develop a strategy for driving standards and creating the demand for ethical and sustainable architectural practice both in the UK and internationally, and
- demonstrate publicly its own and its members' commitment to the public interest, social purpose and sustainable development in architecture.

The Commission has developed a series of key recommendations which are summarised below:

2.0 LEADERSHIP ON ETHICS, VALUES AND STANDARDS

- 2.1 Ensure that a commitment to the public interest, social purpose and sustainable development is a core requirement of Chartered and Chartered Practice membership
- 2.2 Establish the Institute, alongside other professional and industry bodies, as a thought leader in ethics and sustainable development
- 2.3 Create a new form of institutional accountability to the public for its public interest, social purpose and sustainable development objectives

3.0 COLLABORATION AND INFLUENCE

- 3.1 Work to increase demand for demonstrably sustainable architecture through engagement with outside bodies, including: co-professional, commissioning, funding, insurance and legislative organisations
- 3.2 Work to influence and strengthen the policy and regulatory environment, particularly through lobbying, to help deliver ethical and sustainable outcomes
- 3.3 Collaborate with key industry bodies to align the wider construction and property industries with jointly agreed standards for ethical and sustainable practice
- 3.4 Actively engage in knowledge exchange with those working beyond the boundaries of standard architectural practice

4.0 ETHICS AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN PRACTICE

- 4.1 Establish a comprehensive plan to drive the advancement of professional ethics and sustainable architecture across the profession
- 4.2 Promote evidence-informed design to drive and enable continuous improvement in the standard and performance of the built environment
- 4.3 Facilitate and actively promote the routine use of Post Occupancy Evaluation with open reporting of outcomes and sharing of standardised data
- 4.4 Provide tools and guidance to make ethical practice (including employment standards, equality and diversity), and sustainable design central to the architecture profession

5.0 KNOWLEDGE AND COMPETENCE

- 5.1 Address the knowledge and engagement gap in respect of ethics and sustainable development and ensure that everyone entering the profession has adequate knowledge and understanding of ethics and sustainable development
- 5.2 Ensure that all teaching staff in validated schools of architecture have appropriate knowledge of ethics and sustainable development
- 5.3 Ensure that the Institute has appropriate systems in place, through validation and CPD, to confirm that new entrants to and existing members of the profession have appropriate upto- date knowledge of ethics and sustainable development
- 5.4 Develop and promote tools and guidance that can assist architects and practices to respond effectively and robustly to ethical issues that are beyond the scope of legal and/or code of conduct definitions
- 5.5 Encourage and enable professional involvement with research methods and outcomes, and establish a programme to develop research literacy across the profession

6.0 INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITY

- 6.1 Develop programmes to build international capacity in the built environment sector, to help drive sustainable development and ethics in practice, ensuring that these are both culturally and environmentally appropriate, and socially responsible

7.0 RIBA GOVERNANCE

- 7.1 Establish mechanisms to improve institutional transparency and accountability, including through alignment with the principles of the UN Global Compact and social responsibility, as per ISO2600033
- 7.2 Establish mechanisms to ensure more effective delivery of the Institute's commitments