

## Sustainability and the shopping environment

The issue of climate change is at the heart of a design revolution taking place in shopping places. Centres of the future will have to respond not just to the legal, social, and ethical cases for greater environmental responsibility but also to a series of commercial imperatives, including the growing awareness of consumers. The work is already under way, reports Kate Logan from BCSC.

Commercial property accounts for 45% of the energy consumed in Britain; 43% of this total is burned by retailers and shopping centres. This huge figure has highlighted the need for the industry to address its impact on climate change.

Commercial buildings will shortly have to publicly display Energy Performance Certificates - undoubtedly a factor that will stimulate greater energy efficiency. In future design we're likely to see more natural light and ventilation, semi-covered streets and greater use of on-site renewable energy such as micro-generation from wind, tidal and solar sources as well as biomass boilers, underground heat sources, combined heat and power and rainwater harvesting.

With 111 million square metres of retail space and another 7.8 million square metres in the development pipeline over the next decade, the task is huge. Thankfully, consumers and retailers endorse sustainable retail buildings, and investors seeking the right carbon footprint stimulate sustainable schemes. Corporate occupiers are keen to rent 'green' building and this move is spreading to retailing. Marks & Spencer ensures all electricity used in England and Wales is derived from green sources, reducing carbon dioxide emissions by some 40%.

In existing centres strategies include reducing glazing, fitting solar panels, replacing air conditioning with natural ventilation, using heat and light for shorter periods, improving waste management systems and introducing sustainable fit-out requirements for new and renewed leases.

Significant savings are likely through better waste management and tax reductions. Increasingly sustainable premises are more durable, reducing maintenance costs and innovative design techniques can allow waste energy from air conditioning systems to heat nearby housing - lateral thinking at its best.

At Meadowhall, British Land has implemented a waste management system that means nothing goes to landfill. Waste is hand-sorted, recycling used wherever possible, plastics sold and incinerated waste converted to electricity for local homes.

*Responsible Property Investment: Defining the Challenge (RPI)* is Hermes' CSR handbook featuring strategic, managerial and good practice elements in the form of a series of challenges requiring responses. Hermes plans to offer RPI to all occupiers to encourage a constructive dialogue with tenants. And a new PRUPIM/DTZ joint venture buys bulk energy for occupiers, including a £75 million contract for 100% green energy at a discounted fixed price on behalf of over 70 clients, none of whom have to pay the Climate Change Levy. The Carbon Trust supports and advises.

To manage traffic impact - the indirect effect of retailing - co-ordinated travel plans, smart bus transport, effective use of data on catchment areas, shopper-flows and trading patterns, and marketing to change public perceptions are needed. More partnerships are likely, resulting in freight consolidation, timetabled access to towns and remote storage facilities for use by retailers and possibly as pick-up points for customers.

The case for social responsibility is fast being reinforced by a compelling economic argument for sustainable shopping places, and today the pace of implementation is accelerating.

The BCSC publishes a range of detailed research on sustainable development and related issues. For details, contact BCSC, 1 Queen Anne's Gate, Westminster, London, SW1H 9BT. Tel: 020 7222 1122 or email [info@bcsc.org.uk](mailto:info@bcsc.org.uk)