

## July/August 2023: Sustainability – looking beyond data

Thursday 5 August 2023 Sedus showroom

### **Core Team:**

Harsha Kotak, WOD; Joanna Knight, WOD; Ella Fathi, Oktra;

### **Collective Members:**

Rebecca Poll, Grimshaw; Laura Wardrope, JLL; Asif Din, Perkins & Will;  
Rhiannon Laurie, Gensler; May Fawzy, MF Studio / BIID;  
Dicky Lewis, White Red Architects; Lucy Bagshaw, TP Bennett; Emily King, BDP;  
Gurvinder Khurana, M Moser; Natasha Hewlett, Peldon Rose;  
Ana Rita Martins, Woodalls Design; Nigel Tresise, Align; Deepak Parmar, MCM;  
Jennie GreenWalker, MAA Architects; Dom Pegram, Salt & Pegram;  
Jennifer Russell, Bureau Group; Matt Davies, The Furniture Practice;  
Anja Schellenbauer, Conran and Partners; Fiona Edwards, JPA Workspaces;  
Sarah Audsley, Knight Frank; Alison Grant: HLW; Simah Aslam, Abrdn;  
Ruth Marsh, Sheppard Robson; Lydia Randall, BDG A+D; Sam Allen, M Moser; Deborah Allen,  
DouglasJane Studio; Jenna Monteith, Unispace.

**Supporters:** Shaw Contract; Steelcase; Sedus UK; Solus Ceramics; Milliken;  
Orluna LED; Teknion; Workplace Insight; Design Insider..

### **Purpose:**

A 'think tank' group committed to acting as a collective within the workplace design community to identify developments and 'best practice' relating to sustainability.  
This report highlights some of the points raised during the discussion.

## Open Source Database

Lucy Bagshaw, TP Bennett, showcased the company's new 'AD Lib' database. Whilst it is currently under development, the intention is to offer the database on an 'open source' basis to support greater environmental awareness and responsibility across the workplace sector. SDC members were presented with the design and format to provide input and feedback.



The database will also be transparent to manufacturers and suppliers. This will encourage greater transparency and any 'misinformation' will become apparent. Further information will follow ....

All SDC members applauded and recognised the investment to develop this database. In particular, all agreed that it is a significant commitment from TP Bennett to plan to offer this resource on an 'open source' basis.

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### **‘Deep Dive’ – looking beyond data**

During an interview for Issue 2 of SDMagazine, Asif Din (Perkins + Will) commented: “We need to appreciate that availability of data does not necessarily give us more information. There are so many data sources, such as EPDs, product ‘ingredients’, and offgassing certification, but all too often this data can be difficult to translate into useful design outcomes.”

Discussions followed around the importance of research, not just data.

*“We can’t make decisions on data alone, such as solely carbon.”*

*“Clients do want to understand the supply chain but researching and discovering true transparency can be extremely difficult.”*

*“It is important to understand the full range of implications relating to sustainability such as supply chain labour standards; water usage; biodiversity; land use implications.”*

*“It can be extremely difficult to understand chain of custody, particularly with materials with recycled content.”*

*“Many plastics manufactured outside of Europe seldom include clarity in terms of mix of ingredients. In other words, what is it mixed with?”*

*“Manufacturers, particular composite products and materials, should be providing details of recycling routes and disassembly instructions. It is insufficient to simply state the product is xx% recyclable.”*

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## Update from Sedus

Last year, Sedus provided a comprehensive introduction to the company's holistic approach to sustainability embracing people and planet. "Ecology and economy are not contradictions, but indispensable parts of a whole." CEO, Christof Stoll.

During the meeting, Sedus provided an overview of the practicalities of 'take back' schemes. There are costs associated with responsible recycling and these should be recognised. In France, for example, an eco-tax applied at time of purchase.



## OUTCOMES:

### SD Magazine:

As part of its mission is to work collaboratively to share knowledge and 'best practice' to inspire and influence the workplace design sector, SDC has launched a digital publication. The ambition is to provide a platform for views, opinions, and projects within the office workplace sector.

### SD Courses:

SDC will be launching the first of a series of online courses specifically designed for designers working within the workplace environment.

### SDC Forum and Awards:

The next forum and awards was held on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2024. It is designed as an interactive event for workplace designers, manufacturers, and suppliers to share knowledge and learn about efforts towards greater sustainability.

### FOOTNOTE:

The Sustainable Design Collective meets every two months. Each meeting addresses different initiatives designed to tackle the impact on our environment.

A summary document will be published after each meeting which is hosted on the Sustainable Design Collective's web site – an example of knowledge sharing.

We welcome comment and contributions from the office design sector.

[www.woduk.com/sdc](http://www.woduk.com/sdc)