

# 2021 SUSTAINABILITY REPORT



Your Fit Out Partner

Building a  
sustainable future

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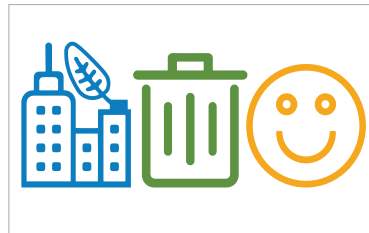
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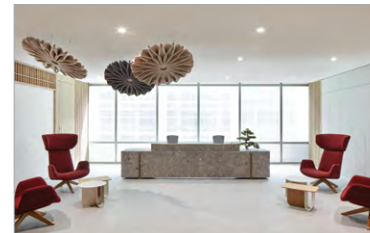
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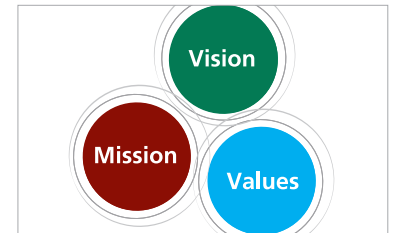
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ECONOMIC

 **Three** of our projects received LEED accreditation.

Annual turnover decreased by **-22%** (compared to last year) due to the COVID-19 economic impact, however, **turnover was 3% above** our 5-year average.

ENVIRONMENT

 We reduced our office energy use and GHG emissions by **5.5%**

We diverted **19 tonnes** of our project site waste from landfill through reuse/recycling.

PEOPLE

We developed a new **training and education** programme. 

**30%** of our employees have worked at Summertown for 10 years or more.

HEALTH, SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENT

 **Zero** fatalities, serious or major injuries amongst our internal labour team and subcontractors [GRI 403-2].

Additional COVID-19 **safety measures** implemented.

2020-2021 SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE

RESPONSIBLE PROCUREMENT

**48%** of the materials for our new projects came from sustainable sources. 

**86%** of materials for our offices came from sustainable sources.

COMMUNITY



Whilst COVID-19 restrictions prevented us from volunteering, we supported local communities through sharing knowledge online and our focus was on our own employees.

TECHNOLOGY

Formation of an internal **Digitalisation Team** to help adapt to the impacts of COVID-19 and new ways of working. 

TRANSPARENCY & ANTI-CORRUPTION



Increased level of open and **transparent communication** to all employees detailing actions the business was taking in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

# INTRODUCTION FROM MARCOS BISH [GRI 102-14]

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## Why is sustainability important to Summertown Interiors?

For more than twenty years our commitment to create new commercial interior spaces in an environmentally friendly and sustainable way has been critical in enabling us to serve our customers, society and the planet. Our customers increasingly require accredited, sustainable fit out solutions. By delivering these solutions we create additional value for our customers – both by optimising resources used during fit out and reducing on-going operational costs. Our team is highly talented and passionate about sustainability. They tell us that our reputation as a sustainability leader is an important factor in their choosing to work here. We know this will continue to be important to future generations of employees.

## Summertown's sustainability strategy

Our sustainability strategy is centred on what our stakeholders have told us matters most to them. It is very simple and focused on our three JOURNEY2030 goals:

- **100% of our projects** will meet external sustainability accreditations
- **Zero waste** to landfill from our offices and our client sites
- **Improved workplace happiness and wellbeing** with the aim of Summertown continuing to be one of the happiest workplaces.

Through this strategy we contribute to local, regional and global ambitions including the United Arab Emirates (UAE) Vision 2021, Green Agenda 2030 and Happiness Charter, Dubai 2040 Urban Master Plan and the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

## The key trends influencing Summertown and its strategy

The pandemic renewed the world's focus on health and wellbeing. This is reflected in the Dubai 2040 Urban Master Plan as well, which focuses on enhancing people's happiness and quality of life. As such, health and wellbeing became a greater focus of Summertown's mission. I've also observed that the following trends have accelerated in the last year:

- **Reducing** greenhouse gas emissions to limit climate change to a 1.5°C warming
- **Reducing** waste and transitioning to a circular economy
- **Adapting** to changing work-life balance requirements
- **Ensuring** decent work and labour standards across supply chains

## Summertown's important achievements in the past year

This has been a challenging year for us all. Like many other companies in our industry, we had to make difficult decisions because of the economic impact of COVID-19 on our business. We activated our emergency plan, stretched our cash flows and made cost savings. Unfortunately, this inevitably also meant making some of our people redundant.





# INTRODUCTION FROM MARCOS BISH [GRI 102-14]

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## Summertown's important achievements in the past year

Despite this we met all of our sustainability targets in the last year with the exception of our office water usage. Increased hand-washing and extra hygiene measures to protect our staff from COVID-19 meant our water usage increased. In addition, some of our usual stakeholder engagement activity was unable to take place.

We used this time as a change-catalyst to make our operations more streamlined and identify new ways of working. I observed that the dynamics of change within our organisation led to increased transparency and a sense of unity for our employees, both of which are crucial to workplace wellbeing.

We also had to refine our use of technology during the pandemic and have identified a platform to digitalise all our forms which will be rolled out in late 2021. This is something we'd already planned to do, but the onset of the pandemic pushed us forward. Working remotely was also a necessary adjustment, but these changes have ultimately made us more agile and collaborative.

## Challenges facing us all

Looking ahead, the main challenge will be the social and economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and navigating through the changing government restrictions.

From an economic point of view, our primary challenge is to get back to pre-COVID-19 levels of business and we have started with a focus on our clients' changing needs and training for our team. However, we believe that the pandemic provides an opportunity for companies to make their workplaces healthier and more sustainable. We aim to provide the best sustainable fit out solutions available to meet our clients' new workplace needs.

I believe sustainability will be even more critical for Summertown and our future business. The focus of our year ahead will be to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic and to continue to deliver on our JOURNEY2030 ambitions.



**Marcos Bish**  
Managing Director



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Summertown Interiors specialises in delivering commercial office, healthcare and education interior fit out projects for global Fortune 500 companies, government authorities and local businesses in the United Arab Emirates [GRI 102-1, 102-2]. We operate entirely within the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and currently employ 45 people across our head office in Dubai and office in Abu Dhabi, and 48 people as part of our onsite teams [GRI 102-3, 102-4, 102-6, 102-7].<sup>1</sup>

Our primary services include [GRI 102-2]:

- **Fit out:** We work alongside architects, designers and project managers to deliver high-quality interior fit outs
- **Design and build:** We offer a complete single point of contact design and build service that can include sustainable solutions, using existing designs or collaborating with our design partners.

Our mission is to consistently deliver high end sustainable interior projects on time and within budget, which help clients:

- Achieve their environmental goals, improving energy, water and resource efficiency for buildings
- Create inspiring workplaces to enhance employee health and happiness
- Deliver operational savings, increase building value and decrease utility costs.

Our commitment to meeting the highest quality, sustainability, and safety expectations for our clients is underpinned by international standards and frameworks, including:

**Environmental sustainability:** Summertown Interiors was the first fit out contractor to occupy Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Gold certified interiors in the UAE and has been awarded the LEED gold certification for its existing building, operations and maintenance (LEED EBOM).

**Quality:** All projects are executed in accordance with the ISO 9001:2015 accredited quality management system.<sup>2</sup>

**Health, safety and the environment:** Our approach to occupational health and safety is based on UAE Labour regulations and is accredited to ISO 45001:2018.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Full details of our incorporated status can be found on page 45 of this report

<sup>2</sup> ISO 9001:2015 Quality management systems

<sup>3</sup> ISO 45001:2018 Occupational health and safety management systems

We are also a partner of The United Workplace, a global network of like-minded businesses, providing consistency of service and local insight on a global scale to fulfil clients' workplace design, workplace strategy, fit out, project management or commercial furniture consultancy and installation needs.





# OUR APPROACH TO SUSTAINABILITY

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For Summertown, sustainability is defined as identifying and managing the environmental, social and economic impacts of our business on society and the planet in a responsible way [GRI 102-11, GRI 102-15].

This includes:

1. Addressing the impact at different stages across our business
2. Understanding and addressing the issues that matter most to our stakeholders

## IMPACT ACROSS OUR BUSINESS

Summertown's main impact [GRI 102-15] includes:

- The positive economic, environmental and social impact of improving existing commercial office spaces
- Our role as a fair employer and ensuring the health, safety, wellbeing, and development of all our employees and subcontractors, including those in our offices and on client sites
- The potentially adverse environmental impact related to the use of resources and the GHG emissions and waste generated from our activities on client sites and in our offices
- The wider impact of our presence in our local community through employee volunteering, in-kind support and our role as thought-leaders on sustainable interiors and design.



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Informed by our impact analysis and stakeholder feedback, we believe the following topics reflect our main impacts and what matters most to our stakeholders [GRI 102-47]. The COVID-19 pandemic impacted our practices and progress during 2020-21 with many initiatives being postponed, cancelled or adapted and others being fast tracked.





# COVID-19 IMPACT

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As stated by Marcos Bish, Managing Director, "This has been a challenging year for us all. Like many other companies in our industry, we had to make difficult decisions because of the economic impact of COVID-19 on our business. Looking ahead, the main challenge will be the social and economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and navigation through the changing government restrictions."



## OUR ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE

Turnover decreased by -22% due to the COVID-19 economic impact on planned build projects.



## OUR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

Health and safety of employees took precedence over office based sustainability initiatives.

Office based employees worked from home during lock-down saving 71,820kms of car journeys to the office.



## OUR PEOPLE

Headcount reduction of 28%

- 24% decrease in headcount for office based employees
- 32% decrease in headcount for on-site employees.



## HEALTH, SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENT

Additional health and safety measures implemented in line with government and local requirements since March 2020.



## RESPONSIBLE PROCUREMENT

Limitations around purchasing and availability of local materials forced us to delay some project programmes.



## BEING PART OF OUR COMMUNITY

Volunteering programme was untenable due to COVID-19 restrictions.



## TECHNOLOGY

Accelerated digitisation plans.



## TRANSPARENCY AND ANTI-CORRUPTION

Increased level of open, timely and transparent communication to all employees.

## CASE STUDY: NEW WAYS OF WORKING

In July 2020 the Summertown corporate team devised a plan to align the organisation with new realities.

The objective was to establish and deliver new ways of working post COVID-19 to meet new business environment and customer needs.

Three working groups were created:

**#1 Future Workspace** (WELL, Sustainability, HSE, AV Equip etc.)

**#2 Create a culture of commerciality, customer centricity and teamwork**

**#3 Technology, Process & Governance** (Digitization, HR App, WFH Policies)

# OUR SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY

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In 2019 we reviewed our sustainability strategy to guide our approach towards 2030. From this we set three JOURNEY2030 goals based on the areas where we believe we can have the most impact on key global sustainability challenges and UAE targets that underpin our sustainability strategy.



## DELIVER 100% SUSTAINABLE PROJECTS

100% Summertown projects to meet externally accredited green/sustainability standards by 2030 (see page 13)



SDG 11, SDG 13



## ZERO WASTE

Zero waste to landfill from Summertown offices and projects by 2030 (see page 17)



SDG 12



## IMPROVE WORKPLACE HAPPINESS & WELLBEING

Continuously strive to be a great place to work (see page 22)



SDG 8



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Last year, we reviewed our JOURNEY2030 sustainability goals to develop short-term key performance indicators:

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL	UAE TARGETS	SUMMERTOWN JOURNEY2030	SHORT TERM KPIS
 <b>SDG 13</b> Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts	The UAE National Climate Change Plan 2050 to limit global temperature rise below 2 degrees celcius.	 <b>DELIVER 100% SUSTAINABLE PROJECTS</b>	<b>By 2020/21</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All projects larger than 2,000m<sup>2</sup> receive free LEED certification.</li> <li>All projects receive free ECO-Sustainable Summertown Interior Certification (ECO SSI).</li> </ul> <b>By 2023</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All projects have pre-site visit to identify materials that can be re-used/recycled.</li> <li>Deliver 5 client workshops per year.</li> </ul>
 <b>SDG 11</b> Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable	The UAE National Agenda ambition to providing a sustainable environment and infrastructure.		
 <b>SDG 12</b> Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns	The UAE 2030 Agenda target to recover 75% of waste by 2021 and Dubai target to achieve 100% recycling by 2030.	 <b>ZERO WASTE</b>	<b>By 2020/21</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Set baseline of total waste going to landfill by material/ type.</li> </ul> <b>By 2023</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce the volume being sent to landfill by 30% (based on 2020 baseline).</li> <li>Find and establish partnerships with three recycling companies (focusing on priority waste streams).</li> </ul>
 <b>SDG 8</b> Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.	The UAE Vision 2021 aims to make the UAE the safest place in the world and for the UAE to be among the five happiest countries by 2021.	 <b>IMPROVE WORKPLACE HAPPINESS AND WELLBEING</b>	<b>By 2023</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Our offices to be recognised by an external third party as a 'best place to work'.</li> <li>Conduct external third-party audit for labour rights for on-site employees.</li> <li>Measure the impact of completed workplace fit outs on client employees.</li> </ul>

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**Supporting sustainable cities and office environments** [SDG 11, 13]

## WHY IT MATTERS

Globally, buildings are responsible for 39% of global greenhouse gas emissions.<sup>4</sup> With energy demand anticipated to increase 50% by 2050 there is an urgent need to transform the built environment to make it healthier and sustainable.<sup>5</sup> Making cities safe, resilient and sustainable is a global and regional priority as captured in UN SDG 11 and as one of the six pillars of the UAE National Agenda.<sup>6</sup>

## OUR MANAGEMENT APPROACH

We believe that through the delivery of our fit out solutions we can help create more sustainable urban environments. As such offering our clients sustainable fit out options is central to our business strategy. **We have set the goal that by 2030: 100% of our projects will meet externally accredited sustainability standards.**<sup>7</sup>

To demonstrate our continued commitment to supporting the transition to sustainable interiors, we set out two more short term KPIs.

### By 2023:

- For all projects our teams will undertake a 'pre-project site visit' to identify materials that can be re-used/recycled ('Green shopping list').
- Our teams will deliver 5 client workshops on sustainable office space and fit out per year.

## OUR PERFORMANCE

- In 2020-2021 our annual turnover decreased by 22% (compared to 2019-2021) due to the COVID-19 economic impact, however, turnover was 3% above our 5-year average [GRI 201-1].
- **26%** of the projects, by revenue, met externally accredited sustainability standards.
- **Three** projects were undertaken meeting LEED external certification requirements.
- Since 2016, **35%** of our projects have met externally accredited sustainability standards.

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.worldgbc.org/news-media/WorldGBC-embodied-carbon-report-published#:~:text=Together%2C%20building%20and%20construction%20are,buildings\)%20accounting%20for%2028%25.](https://www.worldgbc.org/news-media/WorldGBC-embodied-carbon-report-published#:~:text=Together%2C%20building%20and%20construction%20are,buildings)%20accounting%20for%2028%25.)

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.worldgbc.org/sites/default/files/2019-12-18%20WorldGBC%20Strategy%202020-22.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> <https://government.ae/en/about-the-uae/strategies-initiatives-and-awards/federal-governments-strategies-and-plans/national-agenda>  
<https://www.vision2021.ae/en/national-a-genda-2021/list/environment-circle>

<sup>7</sup> Externally accredited sustainability standards include: The Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification system; WELL Certification; Estidama; The Masdar Construction Environmental Management Plan

## Projects delivered which meet externally accredited sustainability standards.

	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Percentage of our projects meeting externally accredited sustainability standards	49%	29%	26%
Number of projects which met externally accredited sustainability standards	4	4	3

## Previously, we set out two KPIs to achieve for 2020/21. Our progress is detailed below.

2020/21 KPI	Progress
All projects larger than 2,000m <sup>2</sup> will receive free LEED certified level certification	Achieved
All projects under 2,000m <sup>2</sup> will receive free ECO-Sustainable Summertown Interior Certification (ECO SSI) accreditation	Accreditation process under development

## WHAT WE HAVE LEARNT AND AREAS WE ARE FOCUSING ON

Last year we introduced free LEED certified level certification to our clients with projects over 2,000sqm. We have also made good progress in developing our free ECO-Sustainable Summertown Interior Certification (ECO SSI) accreditation. Whilst the percentage of projects meeting externally accredited sustainability standards has reduced due a lower number of large projects delivered this year, we are pleased that all of our projects over 2,000sqm received LEED accreditation.

Looking ahead we aim to:

- Engage with all our potential clients to share the free options they have for adopting sustainable fit out solutions
- Complete and roll out our ECO-SSI accreditation. We aim to measure and report the number of projects which receive external sustainable accreditation in future years
- Pilot pre-project site visits by our sustainability teams to identify materials that can be re-used/recycled
- Increase our annual turnover to mitigate the COVID-19 economic impact, and the number of sustainable projects.

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## CASE STUDY: FREE LEED AND ECO-SSI CERTIFICATION

As part of our JOURNEY2030 Goal to 'deliver 100% sustainable projects', this year we offered free LEED certified level certification to our clients with projects over 2,000sqm.

In the coming year we plan to finalise our in-house ECO-SSI certification to ensure smaller fit out projects are delivered to high sustainability standards. The standard is based on six criteria which align with the LEED principles – and includes:

- **Procurement** e.g. a minimum of 25% sustainability sourced wood (FSC)
- **Health and safety** e.g. through twice-weekly health and safety briefings
- **Process quality** e.g. in accordance with ISO 9001:2015 & ISO 45001:2018
- **Energy** e.g. all appliance and electronic equipment met Energy Star requirements
- **Waste** e.g. a minimum of 50% of waste is diverted from landfill
- **Water efficiency** e.g. assessment of potential tap leakages
- **Innovation** e.g. green workshop



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## FEATURE: DUBAI 2040 URBAN MASTER PLAN

The Dubai 2040 Urban Master Plan contextualises Summertown’s commitment to supporting sustainable cities and engaging with sustainability strategy in regions in which we operate.

The Dubai 2040 Urban Master Plan is the seventh development plan for the emirate since 1960. It provides a comprehensive plan for a sustainable urban development in Dubai. It focuses on enhancing people’s happiness and quality of life and reinforcing Dubai as a global destination for citizens, residents and visitors over the next 20 years.

The key objectives of the Dubai 2040 Urban Master Plan are to:

- Upgrade Dubai’s urban areas: Deira and Bur Dubai, Downtown and Business Bay, Dubai Marina and JBR, and two new centres - Expo 2020 Centre and Dubai Silicon Oasis Centre
- Improve the efficiency of resource utilisation
- Develop vibrant, healthy and inclusive communities and double green and leisure areas to provide a healthy environment to residents and visitors
- Provide sustainable and flexible means of mobility
- Foster greater economic activity and attract foreign investments to new sectors
- Enhance environmental sustainability
- Safeguard the emirate’s cultural and urban heritage and strengthen citizens’ attachment to older neighbourhoods
- Develop a comprehensive legislation and plan a governance model to support sustainable development and growth.



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## Supporting the 'circular economy' in the UAE [SDG 12]

### WHY IT MATTERS

The UAE has one of the highest waste generation rates in the world, producing nearly 10 million tonnes of waste each year<sup>8</sup> of which construction and demolition waste accounts for over 47% of the non-hazardous waste.<sup>9</sup> In the UAE, only 20% of waste is currently recycled. Reducing the wastage of materials is central to ensuring sustainable consumption and production patterns (UN SDG 12) and reflects the UAE ambition to achieve recycling of 75% of waste and zero waste to landfill by 2021<sup>10</sup>.

### OUR MANAGEMENT APPROACH

We recognise that traditional office fit outs can have a significant environmental impact, due to two factors:

- Increased demand for natural resources (e.g. new materials)
- Pollution associated with its disposal and treatment of the waste generated.

As such there is an urgent need for the construction and fit out sector to move to a circular economy in which resources are kept in use for as long as possible through life extension and maintenance, reuse, refurbishment, remanufacture and finally recycling. By increasing the proportion of materials, we can offer our clients which can be recovered, reused or recycled from our fit outs, we also provide added value and saves costs for our clients. **We have set the goal that by 2030 our projects and offices will generate zero waste to landfill.**

### PERFORMANCE

Previously, we set one KPI to achieve by 2021. Our progress and targets are detailed below. To demonstrate our continued commitment, we have set the following short-term targets.

Project Waste	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2029-30
Target (based on volume of total project waste in tonnes diverted from landfill)	20% (baseline target set)	20%	30% (short-term KPI)	100% (Zero Waste our JOURNEY2030 Target)
Performance (volume of total project waste in tonnes diverted from landfill)	9%			

### By 2023:

- Reduce the volume of waste sent to landfill by 30% (based on 2020 baseline)
- Find and establish partnerships with three recycling companies (focusing on priority waste streams).

### OUR PERFORMANCE

We are pleased to report that:

- We diverted 19 tonnes of materials from landfill through reuse or recycling
- We generated AED 6,000 of income from the re-sale of waste which was used to offset the cost of recycling waste collection.

### Total waste for projects delivered which meet externally accredited sustainability standards

	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22 TARGET
Volume of waste generated on project sites (tonnes)	New measure	158	207	400
Volume of waste diverted from landfill through reuse or recycling (tonnes)	37.7	47	19	80
Income generated from re-sale of waste (AED)	18,500	14,000	6,000	24,000

### WHAT WE HAVE LEARNT AND AREAS WE ARE FOCUSING ON

We know waste management practices are important to our clients, with 57% of our clients confirming in our client feedback survey that they were aware of our waste management practices on-site.

Our key areas of focus for the year ahead are:

- Start measuring total waste generated on site by material type against our 2020 baseline
- Roll out measurement systems for all sites to record onsite waste by disposal method
- Identifying partnerships with recycling organisations across the UAE.

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.statista.com/statistics/895550/uae-total-solid-waste-generated/>

<sup>9</sup> [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/337870601\\_CONSTRUCTION\\_WASTE\\_MANAGEMENT\\_IN\\_UAE\\_AN\\_EXPLORATORY\\_STUDY](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/337870601_CONSTRUCTION_WASTE_MANAGEMENT_IN_UAE_AN_EXPLORATORY_STUDY)

<sup>10</sup> <https://global-recycling.info/archives/2623>

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## Reducing our office environmental impact [SDG 6, 13]<sup>11</sup>

### WHY IT MATTERS

We know that our continued sustainability leadership is important to our stakeholders, and we are committed to continuing to improve the sustainability performance of our own offices to demonstrate and put in practice the benefits of sustainable building interiors.

- In 2010 we were proud to be the first fit out contractor in the UAE to occupy LEED Gold certified interiors
- In 2016 we received LEED Gold certification for our building's operations and maintenance (LEED EBOM)
- In 2019 we began our journey to achieve WELL Building Standard v2 accreditation. Unfortunately, in 2020, this was postponed due to the COVID-19 economic impact.

### OUR MANAGEMENT APPROACH

Our approach to environmental sustainability within our offices is based on monitoring and adopting international best practices to identify areas where we can improve our performance. As part of our commitment to continual environmental we measure our environmental performance in our offices and set annual targets to reduce impact across water, waste, energy and carbon emissions.

Our sustainability management approach was impacted by the onset of COVID-19 and ensuing restrictions. Ensuring the health and safety of our employees is our top priority. This meant, however, that our environmental performance suffered in a couple areas. We do not anticipate that COVID-19 will impact our long-term sustainability strategy and we will continue to pursue our short and long-term goals as planned.

<sup>11</sup> SDG 6 - Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all; SDG 13 - Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

<sup>12</sup> All our energy is purchased through the state energy provider, which provides information on CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. The energy sources used to generate energy used by Summertown matches the national energy mix – which is primarily natural gas

<sup>13</sup> These figures have been calculated based on the GHG emission information provided by the Dubai Electricity and Water Authority (DEWA) – and include Carbon Dioxide; Methane; Nitrous Oxide; Fluorinated Gases

<sup>14</sup> Metric tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent

<sup>15</sup> All the water was sourced from municipal water supplies

<sup>16</sup> All waste is disposed of using the state provider and segmented into landfill and recycling only. Green waste is composted at the company's own facility

<sup>17</sup> Higher than the average recycling figure in the office as is based on high paper waste due to the disposal of old paper records

### OUR PERFORMANCE



#### Energy

Over the past 12 months we used 122,080 kWh of energy at our offices which was mainly electricity used for cooling and lighting, exceeding our target of reducing energy to below 122,740kWh. Although this represents a net decrease in total energy usage from 2019-20, it equates to 2,713kWh per person – an increase on the previous year of 24%. This is due to a reduction in headcount, therefore increasing the energy intensity per person. We have set the target of reducing our energy usage by a further 5% over the next year [GRI 302-4].

#### Our energy consumption<sup>12</sup> [GRI 302-1, GRI 302-3, GRI 302-4]

	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22 TARGET
Total energy consumption (kWh)	132,640	129,200	122,080	115,976
Energy intensity (kWh per person)	2,287	2,189	2,713	2,577



#### Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions

This year our GHG emissions (Scope 1 and 2) were 53,721 kg CO<sub>2</sub>e, representing a decrease of 3,133 CO<sub>2</sub>e (5.5%). Since the base year of 2012, when we began measuring GHG emissions we have achieved an absolute reduction of 20,169 Kg CO<sub>2</sub>e. Since last year, our emissions intensity (e.g. emissions per person) increased from 964 CO<sub>2</sub>/kg per person to 1,194 CO<sub>2</sub>/kg per person. This was due to a reduction in number of employees. We have set the target of reducing our GHG emissions by a further 5% over the next year.

#### Our greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions (Scope 1 and 2) [GRI 305-1, 305-2]<sup>13</sup>

	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22 TARGET
GHG emissions (Kg CO <sub>2</sub> e) <sup>14</sup>	58,365	56,854	53,721	51,035
GHG intensity (Kg CO <sub>2</sub> e per person)	1,006	964	1,194	1,134



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## Water

This year we used a total of **889M<sup>3</sup>** of water at our offices, representing an average of **19.8M<sup>3</sup>** per person. This was an increase from last year and we therefore did not meet our target. The increase was due to increased handwashing and extra hygiene measures to protect our staff from COVID-19. We have set a target to reduce our water consumption per person by **5%** over the next 12 months.

### Our water usage<sup>15</sup> [GRI 303-1]

	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22 TARGET
Water consumption* M <sup>3</sup>	752	877	889	844.6
Water intensity (M <sup>3</sup> per person)	13.0	14.8	19.8	18.8



## Waste

We record how much waste is generated at our offices both by material type (plastic, aluminium and paper) and waste management route (landfill, recycling, composting). Overall, the total volume of waste sent to landfill this year decreased by **27%** compared to the 2019-20 reporting period. This is a positive step towards our goal to achieve zero waste to landfill by 2030.

### Total weight of waste by type and disposal method<sup>16</sup> [GRI 306-2]

	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22 TARGET
Total waste (KG)	1,239	1,126.4	673.2	750
Waste to landfill (KG)	283	279	204.8	195
Recycled (KG)	836 <sup>17</sup>	847.4	468.4	636.5
Composting (KG)	120	1,200	1,600	1,600

## WHAT WE HAVE LEARNT AND AREAS WE ARE FOCUSING ON

A key learning this year has been to improve the level of detail in which we measure the environmental impact of our offices. This helps identify the main impact and opportunities for improvement, for instance, this year we began measuring and reporting energy use (and associated GHG emissions) by area of the office.





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## CASE STUDY: LEED CERTIFICATION STUDY - TAKEDA

In partnership with Dubai-based interior design firm Roar and CBRE project management, we helped Takeda Pharmaceuticals achieve LEED Silver Certification, awarded by The U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC). To achieve LEED Silver certification for the design and build interior project, the project team established environment-friendly strategies for construction waste management, segregating the waste and sending it for recycling/reusing/composting, thus reducing the environmental carbon footprint of the project.

The key LEED initiatives for this project included:

- Achievement of 12.3% savings on energy use;
- Water and energy savings due to the office location in a LEED Gold building pre-installed with highly efficient water and energy systems;
- Focus on the occupant's health by providing an adequate supply of fresh air, bicycle, and shower facilities at the office spaces;
- Good connections to public transport and services, resulting in reduced greenhouse gas emissions, traffic congestion, and an increased tendency for human activity; and
- Installation of recycling bins on the premises, thus encouraging waste segregation and minimizing waste transferred to landfills.

Rodrigo Rodriguez, General Manager at Takeda Pharmaceuticals, Middle East Cluster, says: *"This a proud moment for us, and we thank Summertown Interiors, Roar, the CBRE project management teams, and all our partners for their overall contributions towards this project. Our latest office investments in Dubai demonstrate our commitment towards the region to ensure better health outcomes for our patients but in a sustainable, environment-friendly way. Our focus is to continue providing cutting-edge innovation to patients, accelerate approval of our treatments, and provide greater access across markets."*



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## Improving workplace happiness and wellbeing [SDG 3, 8]<sup>18</sup>

### WHY IT MATTERS

On average, people spend 90% of their time indoors and a third of their adult life at work. There is growing evidence that providing inspiring workplaces, fulfilling employment opportunities and workplace wellness programmes can improve productivity. For instance, research suggests that happy workers are 13% more productive<sup>19</sup>. The importance of supporting workplace happiness and wellbeing is reflected in the UAE National Programme for Happiness and Positivity, as part of the UAE's goal to be among the top five happiest countries by 2021<sup>20</sup>.

The COVID-19 pandemic placed a renewed emphasis on workplace happiness and wellbeing. Summertown employees, alongside most of the global workforce, adjusted to working from home and then shifted to a hybrid model once the UAE restrictions eased, working both in the office and up to two days remotely. We learnt during the COVID-19 lock-down that face-to-face collaboration is a vital part of our business and culture, and believe a hybrid model is the best option for our business. At Summertown, we believe in taking care of our people such that they are empowered to be happier and more productive people.

### OUR MANAGEMENT APPROACH

Our people are at the heart of our business. Everything we do, and our success, is dependent upon them. Ensuring our employees are engaged, remunerated and have the skills and knowledge to perform their roles and to grow, develop and feel fulfilled, is essential for us to prosper as a company. **Our 2030 goal is to improve workplace happiness and wellbeing.**

<sup>18</sup> SDG 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages; SDG 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all. Target 8.5: By 2030, to achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value.

<sup>19</sup> <https://phys.org/news/2019-10-happy-workers-productive.html>  
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbesinsights/2018/03/12/motivated-employees-are-key-to-your-companys-success-in-the-digital-age/#56103d2c2ddc>

<sup>20</sup> <https://u.ae/en/about-the-uae/the-uae-government/government-of-future/happiness>

<sup>21</sup> all office employees identify five goals and objectives at the beginning of the year. Progress against these goals is used to identify future career development and plan ongoing training needs.

As part of our commitment to supporting workplace happiness, last year we set three short term KPIs for 2023, relating to our impact on people and employees at the different sites of our operations:

- **For our employees at our offices:** To be recognised by an external third party as a 'best place to work'
- **For our employees onsite:** To be scored in the highest category annually in external third-party audits for labour rights
- **For our clients' employees:** To enhance the health and wellbeing of employees at our client sites through measurable impact of Summertown fit out of their workplace.

We look forward to reporting on our progress next year.

### OUR EMPLOYEES

Like many other companies in our industry, we had to make difficult decisions because of the economic impact from COVID-19 on our business. This involved stretching our cash flows and reducing costs, which inevitably meant losing 28% of our people across our office and site-based employees. However, we have survived thanks to the dedication of our people and tireless teamwork.

57% of our employees have been with Summertown for at least 5 years, with 30% having worked with Summertown for 10 years or more. We are proud of the longevity of our teams and our aim is to ensure Summertown continues to be a great place to work. Our commitment to our employees includes both office and onsite employees, and is based on the following components:

- Providing safe and happy working environments
- Enhancing employee health and wellbeing (including supporting a healthy work-life balance)
- Offering a competitive range of employee rewards and benefits
- Training and professional development via our Goals and Objectives performance appraisal system<sup>21</sup>

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## OUR PERFORMANCE

Our people [GRI 102-8, 401-1]

### GENDER

#### Office Employees



76% 2020-2021

76% 2019-2020

80% 2018-2019

#### On-site Employees



100%

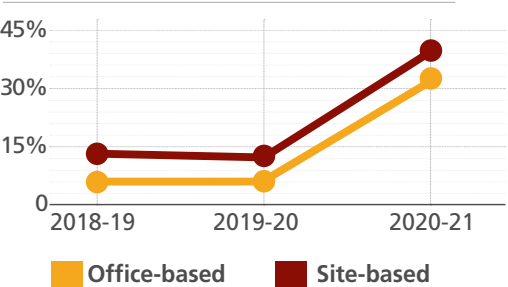


24% 2020-2021

24% 2019-2020

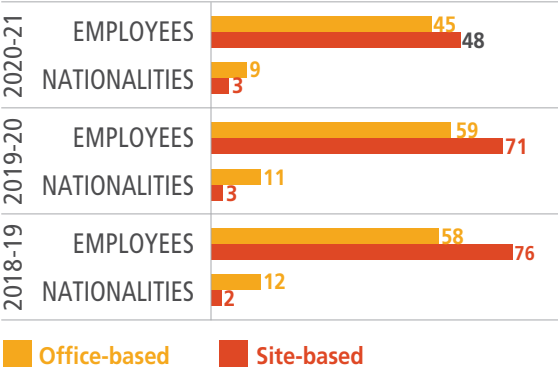
20% 2018-2019

### TURNOVER RATE

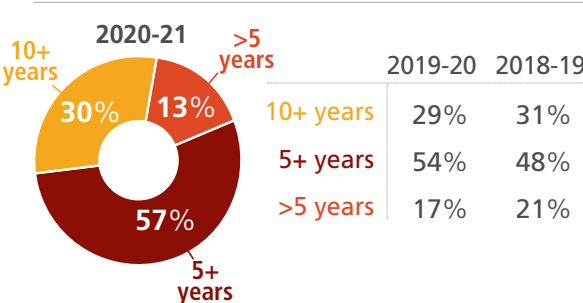


Our work towards WELL certification for our Dubai offices was put on hold during the pandemic but will recommence when resources allow.

### NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES & NATIONALITIES



### OFFICE EMPLOYEES LONGEVITY



## TRAINING AND EDUCATION

### Office-based employees

This year office-based employees collectively undertook 365 hours of training, which represents an average of 8 hours per employee [GRI 404-1]. This was less than previous years due to COVID-19 restrictions. Training included:

- Wellbeing – Breathing techniques; Dealing with Uncertainty
- Emergency First Aid
- New technologies and software
- LEED and WELL
- New ways of working – management team

### Site-based employees

This year our site employees undertook **88 hours** of training representing an average of **1.8 hours** per employee [GRI 404-1]. The training was in Fire Safety Fundamentals and Proper use of Fire Extinguishers.

### All employees

During the first few months of 2021, we focused on the future of our people. This included a total of **120 training hours** for the whole company to develop their own Personal Development Plan (PDP). From this we were able to develop a new comprehensive training and education programme for the coming year.

### Recognition

We believe that peer to peer recognition is an important factor in motivating employees and encouraging a more collaborative approach to work and sense of team spirit. This year, we used our peer to peer recognition system called "Caught you doing the right thing!", allowing employees to recognise their colleagues who have gone above and beyond in their role.

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## TRAINING AND EDUCATION

### Health and Wellbeing

Our Health and Wellbeing programme aims to reduce stress, boost morale, promote a healthy lifestyle and improve employee engagement and teamwork. This year we delivered 7 health and wellbeing initiatives for our office employees. These initiatives included:

- **Health:** Weekly yoga classes, table tennis tournament
- **Wellbeing:** Mindful Me 'breathing' workshop, Mindful Me 'dealing with uncertainty' workshop, creation of an office garden space, project celebrations held outdoors, Christmas cookies distributed & 1 day holiday (across Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve).

Unfortunately, the onset of COVID-19 limited our ability to participate in group health and wellness activities. Nevertheless, our commitment to our employees' health and wellness remained steadfast. We immediately implemented safety measures for site workers on site and in their accommodations according to government protocols and encouraged vigilant personal hygiene. We encourage our employees to get vaccinated against the virus and aim to achieve 100% vaccination among Summertown staff.

### WHAT WE HAVE LEARNT AND AREAS WE ARE FOCUSING ON

The pandemic also placed a renewed emphasis on the importance of mental health. Summertown facilitated a series of online sessions on mental health. We were already hosting mental health workshops prior to COVID-19; moving them online ensured accessibility as our employees adjusted to remote working. Over the next year, the areas we will focus on include:

- Establishing metrics to assess the impact of our fit out projects on employee health and happiness
- Refining our wellbeing programme based on feedback from employees
- Achieving WELL Health and Safety certification by Q4 2021
- Rolling out our new training and education programme.

A further challenge we are exploring and will report on in future reports is how to support our employee health and wellbeing when they are working from home. We have set up a working team to explore and define our future workplace including our employee culture, use of technology and promoting collaboration and an agile workforce.

### FEATURE: BEST WORKPLACE SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAMME

Summertown were awarded '2019 Best Workplace Sustainability Programme' at the third annual Happiness @ Work Awards.

Established in July 2017, the Happiness @ Work Award is the only award of its kind in the region and the world. The awards recognize and honour forward thinking organizations from public, private and not for profit sectors that believe that happy Employees Create High Performing Organisations.

At Summertown, we embrace sustainability in every aspect of the business and strongly believe that a company cannot be sustainable unless employees at all levels share this vision and are committed to achieving it.





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### CASE STUDY: EMPLOYEE WORKPLACE WELLBEING:

One of our JOURNEY2030 goals is to 'improve workplace happiness & wellbeing'. Unfortunately, due to the global pandemic, the shift to hybrid-remote working had potential to affect both wellbeing and communication at Summertown. Recognising this we enlisted a business school researcher to help us understand this further which elicited a 74% response rate. Key findings:

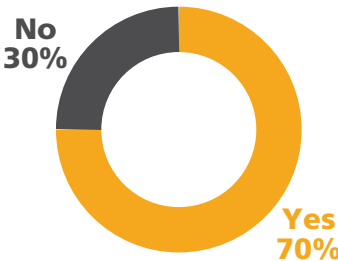
- Over 90% of respondents scored Summertown's Management Team 9 out of 10 for clarity of communications around COVID-19 measures.
- 70% of respondents believed Summertown Corporate Culture had changed during the pandemic - with top reasons being more productive, dynamic, resilient, teamwork
- 100% of respondents were proud to work for Summertown
- The most popular idea for improving wellbeing and happiness was to bring back the wellbeing programme.

"It's so important that employees take more accountability and they should have can-do attitudes and strong communication between peers."

Summertown HR Manager

### Employee Wellbeing COVID-19 research conducted in November 2020 amongst all employees:

Q: Do you believe the corporate culture at Summertown has changed during the pandemic?



How corporate culture changed	% responses
Better ( more productive, dynamic, resilient, teamwork)	31
More of COVID-19/hygiene	12
Home working, less interaction	25
Different structure, technology focused	19
Other	12

Q: What could Summertown do to improved your wellbeing and happiness during COVID-19?

Common responses	% responses
Bring back the wellbeing programme	21
More flexible with home working/deadlines/work life balance	10
Recognition and appreciation for efforts	7
More direct personal care for employees	17
No comments / No improvement needed	38
Other	7

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## FEATURE: SUMMERTOWN'S FIRST FEMALE CONSTRUCTION MANAGER

In March 2021 we were delighted to appoint our first female Construction Manager, Krystal Fernandes. Krystal has been an integral part of the Summertown Projects team for over 7 years, during which time she has attained her LEED GA and WELL AP qualifications.

Her transition from Project Coordinator to Construction Manager is part of our strategy to promote and develop talent within our own business and offer opportunities to learn new skills.

Krystal's new role will draw on her experience to meet challenging project deadlines and lays the foundation for her aspiration to become a Project Manager.



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**Maintaining high  
standards for health  
and safety** [SDG 8]<sup>22</sup>

## WHY IT MATTERS

The International Labour Organisation estimates that 2.3 million people around the world succumb to work-related accidents or diseases every year; this corresponds to over 6,000 deaths every day<sup>23</sup>. We recognise the critical importance of health and safety for the construction industry in the Middle East and are committed to having clear policies and procedures which are implemented for our employees, sub-contractors, vendors, clients and partners on site and at our own premises.

## OUR MANAGEMENT APPROACH

Our approach to Health, Safety and the Environment (HSE) is based on UAE labour regulations and international best practices. This year we maintained our accreditation of ISO 45001:2018. Key elements of our approach include:

- Providing appropriate personal protective equipment
- Investing in machinery maintenance
- Incident and accident reporting, including safety observations and ‘near misses’
- Empowering staff through training, including daily Toolbox Talks and regular safety drills
- All vendors and sub-contractors providing services to Summertown’s projects are required to comply with Summertown’s HSE requirements and provide their Health and Safety statistics.

HSE is managed by the Summertown HSE Committee, comprised of eight representatives from across our senior management and project teams. This committee is responsible for:

1. Managing, controlling and updating the procedures and policies to ensure site safety
2. Reviewing current practices and providing feedback to inform future HSE decision-making, including as required by UAE Construction HSE Laws and international best practice
3. Setting project specific HSE objectives and targets
4. Reviewing monthly HSE key performance indicator (as part of the monthly HSE Management Report to the Corporate Team)
5. Risk assessments for work-related hazards that pose risk of high-consequence injury [GRI 403-2].



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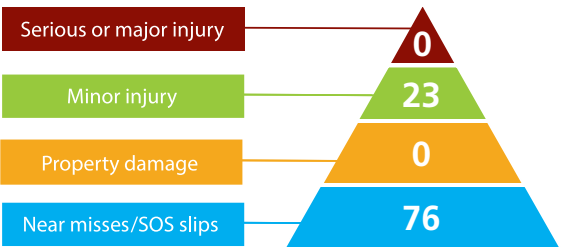
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## OUR PERFORMANCE

We are pleased to report that over the past 12 months there have been no fatalities and no serious or major injuries amongst both our full-time workers and subcontractors [GRI 403-2]. We have had 23 minor injuries across our workforce including subcontractors. The main types of injury include cuts, bruises and sprains from trips and falls and small burns from operating machinery [GRI 403-2].

	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22 TARGET
Lost-time injuries frequency rate (LTIFR) – Targets	<0.05	<0.05	<0.05	<0.05
Lost-time injuries frequency rate (LTIFR)	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Serious or major injury	0	0	0	
Minor injury	23	42	23	
Property damage	1	1	0	
Near misses	130	66	76	

## Summertown actual YTD April 20-March 21



We track our HSE performance against the ‘Frank Bird Model’<sup>24</sup> or the ‘accident triangle’ which provides a relationship between serious accidents, minor accidents and ‘near misses’. We use this model to identify where ‘near misses’ which are defined as, “situations observed by personnel that could potentially result in an incident or accident

if not rectified” and may represent future risks and opportunities to improve our health and safety performance. The theory is that if minor accidents are reduced then major ones are less likely to occur<sup>25</sup>.

## WHAT WE HAVE LEARNT AND AREAS WE ARE FOCUSING ON

The health and safety of our employees is of critical importance for our business, at all times, this has been brought into specific focus during the COVID-19 pandemic. To protect all our employees in our offices and on sites we have introduced several procedures and plans in addition to, and above, the national requirements from the UAE Government. These included:

1. Implement site briefings on site, temperature checks, sanitising stations and face masks.
2. Additional hand washing stations.
3. Ensure social distancing can be maintained during transportation of workers to site.
4. Implementing social distancing for site visitors. 6am meetings with clients, so they were not onsite at the same time as the workers.
5. ‘Toolbox’ talks to all sites with cascade approach for briefings i.e. Mental Health - Managers briefed first - they were then responsible for briefing their site teams.

One of the biggest challenges was addressing local regulations that were subject to lots of changes. We encouraged all our direct staff to get Vaccinated and have now got 98% coverage.

Our priority is now getting people back to the office whilst adhering to ISO45001:2018 which requires us to:

- Identify and eliminate potential health and safety hazards and risks
- Increase awareness of health and safety risks
- Ensure workers take an active role in health and safety matters

<sup>22</sup> SDG 8 Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments of all workers, including migrant workers, particularly women migrants and those in precarious employment

<sup>23</sup> [https://www.ilo.org/moscow/areas-of-work/occupational-safety-and-health/WCMS\\_249278/lang-en/index.htm](https://www.ilo.org/moscow/areas-of-work/occupational-safety-and-health/WCMS_249278/lang-en/index.htm)

<sup>24</sup> <https://risk-engineering.org/concept/Heinrich-Bird-accident-pyramid>

<sup>25</sup> [https://www.iso.org/files/live/sites/isoorg/files/archive/pdf/en/iso\\_45001\\_briefing\\_note.pdf](https://www.iso.org/files/live/sites/isoorg/files/archive/pdf/en/iso_45001_briefing_note.pdf)



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## FEATURE: IS YOUR WORKSPACE READY FOR RETURN TO WORK?

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the workplace environment is unprecedented, and businesses will need to re-shape their physical environment and develop new policies to enable employees to return to work safely. It also offers businesses an opportunity to modify their workplaces to accommodate new ways of working and make their workplace healthier and safer.

We are supporting companies to assess and adapt their current workplaces to meet new government guidelines. Most of the physical changes required are small and can be implemented cost effectively and quickly. We have developed a simple four step process, which all organisation can follow:

- 1. PLAN:** Form a team to develop plans and implement 'return to work' actions and ensure meeting government guidelines
- 2. COMMUNICATE:** Share the 'return to work' plans and protocols to all employees, with regular bulletins on progress and changes to the plans
- 3. PREPARE:** Create a safe, healthy, clean workspace, including:
  - Re-configuring of floorplans to create social distancing
  - Installing touchless technology and hygiene equipment e.g. Install plexiglass or panel barriers
  - Improving air quality e.g. advanced air purification by Carbon Filtration, HEPA
  - Advanced cleaning
  - Signage to education e.g. signal circulation routes for high traffic corridor
  - Implement well-being practices e.g. regular updates and support new ways of working
- 4. MAINTAIN:** Continuously monitor your workplace to ensure protocol is followed, communicate changes and support new ways of working.



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## CASE STUDY: WELL HEALTH AND SAFETY RATING CERTIFICATION

**Summertown is in the process of qualifying for this rating to enable everyone to go back to work post COVID-19 and feel safe. We aim to achieve certification in late 2021.**

Informed by the WELL Building Standard and more than 600 experts from the Task Force on COVID-19, the WELL Health-Safety Rating for Facility Operations and Management helps buildings and organizations address the health, safety and well-being of their most valuable asset-people.

A visible indication of confidence and trust, the WELL Health-Safety seal communicates to everyone entering a space that evidence-based measures have been adopted and third-party verified.

Focused on operational policies, maintenance protocols and emergency plans, the WELL Health-Safety Rating includes strategies to help:

- Keep spaces clean and sanitized
- Provide essential health benefits and services
- Communicate your health and safety efforts
- Help everyone prepare for an emergency
- Assess air and water quality

<https://wellhealthsafety.com>



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# RESPONSIBLE PROCUREMENT

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## Sourcing materials responsibly and sustainably [SDG 12]

### WHY IT MATTERS

By 2050 the global population is predicted to reach 9.7 billion<sup>26</sup>. Based on current consumption rates it will require three planet Earths' to provide all the natural resources needed for this human population<sup>27</sup>. Achieving sustainable consumption and production is one of the most critical and complex challenges facing humanity, as reflected in SDG 12.

The UAE national sustainable consumption and production plan framework (2019-2030) sets out four priority areas<sup>28</sup>:

- Green infrastructure
- Sustainable public procurement
- Sustainable manufacturing
- Sustainable food production and consumption.

We recognise that one of our biggest impacts relates to the resources and materials we buy for our clients and our own operations. We also know that our clients are increasingly looking for their suppliers to ensure materials used on their sites which are responsibly produced and come from sustainable sources. Our approach is based on two levels:

1. All products must meet our responsible procurement requirements (see box 1)
2. We work with client and design teams to increase the volume of sustainable materials used within our fit outs (see box 2).

### SUMMERTOWN RESPONSIBLE PROCUREMENT REQUIREMENTS:

All suppliers and subcontractors must provide substantial documentation and evidence relating to their processes for:

- Quality management
- Health and safety
- Business integrity
- Anti-corruption
- Labour standards
- Environmental sustainability
- Supply Chain CSR Management

### FEATURE: PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION

Our ambition is that 100% of the materials we purchase go beyond our responsible procurement criteria to actively promote more sustainable products and services, by meeting internationally recognised sustainability standards. The criteria we use for key materials include [GRI 102-9]:

- **Cleaning products and materials** which have met external eco-labels accreditation
- **Electrical goods** which meet international standards such as ENERGY STAR<sup>29</sup>
- **Foods** which meet sustainability accreditation such as Rainforest alliance, Fairtrade or organic
- **Furniture** which is reused or repaired
- **Glass and ceramics** which are regionally sourced
- **Office fixtures and fittings**, such as blinds and carpet tiles with recycled content
- **Paints** which are low in volatile organic compounds (VOCs)
- **Metal materials** with recycled content
- **Wood-based materials** which are FSC-Certified.

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.un.org/development/desa/en/news/population/world-population-prospects-2019.html>

<sup>27</sup> <https://worldpopulationhistory.org/carrying-capacity/>

<sup>28</sup> <https://www.moccae.gov.ae/assets/bb4a98d4/uae-national-sustainable-production-and-consumption-plan-2030-2019-framework.aspx>

<sup>29</sup> ENERGY STAR is a symbol for energy efficiency, energy-efficient products and practices.

Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification is awarded to products that are made with, or contain, wood from responsibly-managed forests. EPEAT is a procurement system that compares electronic products based on their environmental impact.



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## OUR PERFORMANCE

This year:

- **100%** of our new suppliers and sub-contractors were screened against the Summertown responsible procurement policy. This equated to 18 new suppliers and 39 new sub-contractors. [GRI 414-1].
- **47.5%** of the materials for our client sites came from sustainable sources.
- **87%** of materials for our offices came from sustainable sources.

Key highlights this year include:

- Investing in repairs and upgrades to our existing laptops, computers, and printers to avoid replacing the same with new ones
- A significant increase in sustainable office food and beverage purchasing with 60% from sustainable sources.

### Sustainability purchasing

	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22 TARGET
Our clients – sustainable products (%)				
Target	40	42	47	49
Achieved	40.8	44.6	47.5	
Our offices – sustainable products (%)				
Target	87	88	88	88
Achieved	87.3	90.4	87	

## WHAT WE HAVE LEARNT AND AREAS WE ARE FOCUSING ON

Key procurement issues arising as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic meant we had to find new ways of working with our suppliers to find alternatives, across both sustainably sourced and non-sustainable products, and address the transport challenges.

Our solution was to find alternative products from the same suppliers with shorter lead times in order to meet project deadlines, whilst ensuring our clients were getting the same quality and most comparable design-specified product on time. For example, for our DIFC Innovation Hub project, the carpet and vinyl originally specified by the designers was not available in time to meet the project deadline, so we worked with the supplier to find a suitable alternative, which was the same specification, just a slightly different shade of the specified colour.

### FEATURE: CHALLENGES OF INCREASING THE PERCENTAGE OF SUSTAINABLY SOURCED PRODUCTS

The main challenge is attaining substantiating documentation for products that are sustainably sourced, specifically from small local manufacturers.

High-end AV and IT products, and plastic pipes are the most difficult to source sustainably, and AV typically consumes a lot of energy. What are we doing about it? We are working with our suppliers to provide sustainable documentation and products wherever possible.

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## CASE STUDY: ABU DHABI EXECUTIVE OFFICE

The Abu Dhabi Executive Office (ADEO) wanted to create an agile working environment with technology as an enabler, allowing activity-based working and cross functional collaboration, with a timeless interior design rooted in the past, and connected to the future.

The result is a refined industrial interior workplace that reflects the heritage of the Arabian Peninsula and is inspired by the local natural landscape colours and textures. The new workspace incorporates a combination of closed and open workspaces, collaboration and focus rooms, DG office, pantry, command centre and meeting rooms.

The following materials were salvaged during demolition and reused for the project.

Description of reused material	Location and purpose used for	Quantity	Unit (LM/M3/KG)
Existing wall cladding	Safety signage at 5th floor	3	100kg
Existing wall cladding	Temporary Meeting table at site	1	30kg
Existing wall cladding	Temporary eating table and chairs	3	150kg
Rockwool insulation (size: 50x600x1200)	Level 5 new partition	700	pcs



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**Giving back  
to our local  
community** [SDG 11]<sup>30</sup>

## WHY IT MATTERS

The UAE Vision 2021 sets out the goal to preserve a cohesive society proud of its identity and sense of belonging, and for the UAE to be among the best in the world in the Human Development Index and to be the happiest of all nations so that its residents feel proud to belong to the UAE.

## OUR MANAGEMENT APPROACH

We are proud citizens of the UAE and are committed to giving back to our local community. We support our local communities directly and indirectly through:

- **The Summertown Employee Volunteering scheme** – all employees are entitled to two days of paid leave to participate in volunteering activities during working hours.
- **Community investment** – via financial donations, employee-matched funding schemes and sponsored events.
- **Knowledge sharing to support the UAE's transition to a green economy** – through our memberships of the Dubai Chamber Sustainability Network, Netherlands Business Council and The United Workplace Group [GRI 102-12, 102-13].

## OUR PERFORMANCE

This year:

- Our MD, Marcos Bish, was part of – ‘Love that Design’ Design Collective panel, was a MEED awards judge and presented at the Dubai Chamber panel. Marcos was also interviewed by Dubai Eye Business Breakfast radio about encouraging companies to ‘Rethink the Workspace’ as employees return to work.

- Projects Director, Nicola Trivett, spoke with both ‘Love that Design’ and ‘Workspace’ on her career, being a working mother of four children and working from home during the pandemic.
- Due to COVID-19 restrictions, Summertown employees were unable to volunteer as they usually do. We hope that volunteering will resume as restrictions ease and the pandemic situation improves.
- We regularly support our local communities directly through financial donations, employee-matching funding schemes, sponsored events and in-kind projects. Some of these activities were cancelled or postponed due to the pandemic and we were also unable to support our local communities through in-kind projects during 2020-21. Since 2013, we have donated AED 153,944.

## WHAT WE HAVE LEARNT AND AREAS WE ARE FOCUSING ON

As the pandemic impacted working practices everywhere it became clear to us that there was a need to rethink workspaces in preparation for the ‘return to work’.

As well as addressing our own opportunity to ‘build back better’ we look for opportunities to share our expertise with community organisations looking to downsize, reorganise or create a more agile working environment.

## FEATURE: EXPO 2020 - TERRA SUSTAINABILITY PAVILION

In March 2021, our sustainability committee visited Dubai EXPO2020 Terra Sustainability Pavilion during the limited preview period prior to EXPO2020's official opening in Oct 2021.

The pavilion has been built to be net-zero for both energy and water and is a LEED platinum certified building, the highest external accreditation available for sustainable architecture. The highlight of our visit was the opportunity to stand underneath the striking solar-powered ‘Energy-Trees’ that moved with the sun like sunflowers.

<sup>30</sup> SDG 11 Make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable



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## CASE STUDY: COVID-19: AN OPPORTUNITY TO BUILD BACK BETTER

The impact of COVID-19 has led to all businesses needing to re-shape their physical environment to ensure the safety of their employees, and make the necessary adjustments to weather the economic impact. Summertown's four-step COVID-19 Contingency Plan is detailed below.

### STEP 1: Awareness, initial business response

- Created internal COVID-19 Contingency Team, who met at least once a week to review evolving government guidelines and restrictions. Continuously assessed impact on projects, hurdles to working from home, employee concerns, and financial impact
- Company-wide communication to employees weekly on government policies and company policies
- Safety procedures implemented for site workers and office workers instructed to work from home.

### STEP 2: SWOT analysis

- Assessed strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats arising from the pandemic

### STEP 3: Survival

- Short-term measures to reduce cash expenditure
- Some employees made redundant
- Capitalised on government Early Leave scheme, asking for volunteers to take leave.

### STEP 4: Actions to align Summertown with new realities

- Re-structure team
- Three working groups led by corporate team:
  1. Future Workspace (WELL, Sustainability, HSE, AV Equipment, etc.)
  2. Culture of commerciality, customer centricity, and teamwork;
  3. Technology, Process, and Governance (digitalisation, WFH policies, HR app, etc.).
- Focus on four areas going forward:
  1. Career & skills building (learning and development sessions, Personal Development Plans, etc.)
  2. Customer centricity solutions
  3. Team communication
  4. Employee recognition.

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## Integrating new technologies

### WHY IT MATTERS

UAE Vision 2021 aims to transform our economy to be driven by knowledge and innovation, through investment in science, technology, research and development. Technological and digital advances are shaping the construction industry and changing how buildings and interior spaces are designed, constructed, operated and maintained.

### OUR MANAGEMENT APPROACH

Given the shift to working from home, accessibility of technology is of paramount importance to Summertown employees and clients. This has taken priority over the past 12 months.

We continue to be committed to identifying, piloting and rolling the latest technological solutions to improve our business, this includes:

- Use of digital technologies to improve safety, reduce cost and improve efficiencies
- Mobile technology and software to support our project managers and construction sites
- Building information modelling (BIM) to improve our customer delivery
- Augmented and virtual reality to train workers and prevent possible hazards
- Analytics to better analyse their material cost, timelines and delivery
- Real-time data, automated and robotic equipment to increase our efficiencies and productivity
- Wireless sensors, smart buildings to deliver fit outs in a more sustainable way.

### OUR PERFORMANCE

This year we went paperless with our new HR App, an online platform for employee leave approvals, expenses, medical insurance and HR documents. All employees have undertaken training on the HR App and have adapted quickly to the new system.

We also started the digitisation our quality management system forms (ISO) and e-signature using the Circularo platform.

### WHAT WE HAVE LEARNT AND AREAS WE ARE FOCUSING ON

Recognising the challenges facing future working practices, there are three areas we are exploring over the next year:

- Final roll-out for the digitisation of our quality management system forms (ISO) and e-signature using the Circularo platform
- Continuing rapid progress towards a paperless office
- Further new software to help our teams work remotely and streamline processes.

### DIGITALISATION TEAM

Our COVID-19 Contingency Plan identified four focus areas for Summertown going forward. One of these focus areas is 'Technology, Process & Governance'. We formed an internal cross functional Digitalisation Team with the following objectives:

- Eliminate miscommunication between stakeholders and the requirement of their roles
- Sustainable, environmentally friendly, paperless
- Improve processes to make them more effective and resource efficient
- Align processes to deliver value to business priorities
- Facilitate process improvement and ultimately automation
- Monitor and track the status of tasks and giving alerts

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## CASE STUDY: SUMMERTOWN DIGITALISATION INITIATIVE

Our COVID-19 Contingency Plan identified four focus areas for Summertown going forward. One of these focus areas is 'Technology, Process & Governance', which includes digitalisation of our quality management system forms (ISO) and e-signatures. We had identified the lack of digital forms and e-signatures as a barrier to remote working and efficiency, and the initiative accelerated our previous goal to become a paperless office goal to a priority.

### Programme and roll out

1. Internal cross-functional Digitalisation Team formed
2. Team chose Canon and they recommended using the Circularo platform
3. All Summertown email users will become a User on Circularo
4. All our ISO forms are being converted by our Digitalization Team to E-forms
5. All E-forms will be loaded onto the Circularo platform
6. All Users will get a digital signature
7. Initially it will be a "free flow" system; Users will decide who to send E-forms to, this is not automated yet (possibly in the future, in a way that is the way we use the QMS at the moment)
8. Train all Users on the system
9. Open the platform to all Users and start using it (the folder with ISO forms on the Server will no longer be available).

### Benefits

Digital forms will benefit Summertown employees, clients, and suppliers. Likewise, it will help us reduce paper usage, monitor and track the status of tasks and give alerts.



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## CASE STUDY: HR APP INITIATIVE

### Background

An output from our 'New Ways of Working' brainstorm session with our corporate team in July 2020, we identified 3 areas of action following initial impacts of C-19. One of them was 'Technology, Process & Governance' which included our employee leave approval system that was using paper forms.

### Programme and roll out

- EmiratesHR selected as new platform to remove the need for paper approvals and convert to online.
- EmiratesHR software is accessible online and by mobile app by all office employees
- Software includes:
  - Employee profile data (personal information, UAE visa and ID card)
  - Employee related documentation portal (employee handbook)
  - Healthcare Insurance information
  - Expense reimbursement & approval function (online submissions of expenses for approval)
  - Community Announcements (internal communication platform we now use instead of an intranet)
- The system went live in November 2020, following training sessions for all employees
- The main challenges involved collating all the data and uploading it into the system.

### Results

- Elimination of paper leave forms (holiday & sick leave, expense reimbursement)
- Enables remote access WFH (no need to be in the office) for employees and managers
- Easier reporting for finance, HR and management.



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## Being an open and transparent business

### WHY IT MATTERS

We aim to be open and transparent to all our stakeholder from our employees and their families, suppliers, subcontractors and clients through to local community groups and neighbours. In doing so we contribute to the UAE Vision 2021 which aims for a safe and secure nation built on strong and transparent values in its institutions with no corruption and bribery.

### OUR MANAGEMENT APPROACH

Our approach to open and ethical business across our organisation and with our suppliers and clients is based upon the **Summertown Code of Business Conduct** which provides the guiding principles we believe are central for our people to uphold ethical standards when conducting business:

- All employees receive a copy of the Code during their induction and it is now available online on our new HR application software as part of our digitalisation roll-out.
- We provide regular training and communication on key aspects and, as a reminder and to be consistent with best business practice, we require all employees to acknowledge on annual basis that they comply with our Code of Conduct.

### OUR PERFORMANCE

All our new employees undertook training on our compliance learning. The topics covered within this online module included ethical dilemmas, how to treat confidential information, scenarios around gifts and entertainment and tips for preventing bribery [GRI 205-2].

One of the interesting effects of the dynamics of change, imposed by COVID-19 impacts, was an increased level of transparency and sense of unity for our employees. We increased the level of open, transparent communication as soon as lock-down started to ensure our employees were aware of the actions the business was taking in response to the pandemic and new government restrictions and protocols.

### WHAT WE HAVE LEARNT AND AREAS WE ARE FOCUSING ON

Whilst Summertown's COVID-19 induced business action plans were formulated by a small group, we recognised the importance of sharing our decisions and new ways of working very openly with the whole company due to the very human nature of the problems.

To continually improve our commitment to transparency, we also actively seek third party review and accreditation relating to our code of conduct, employee conditions and environmental data. In the coming year we will be implementing more training and education that includes human trafficking and other ethics-based training.

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Summertown is led by Managing Director Marcos Bish. Our sustainability strategy is governed by the Summertown Corporate Team which comprises Marcos and senior representatives from the Finance, Operations, Quality, Human Resources, Marketing and Commercial departments [GRI 102-18]. Within our Corporate Team 57% are women and 43% are men. 57% are aged between 30 and 50 years. The remainder are over 50. [GRI 405-1].

The Summertown Sustainability Committee is made up of employees from across our business. The committee meets every month and is tasked with the delivery of our sustainability strategy, plans and reports; this includes:

- Identifying emerging trends and international best practices to advise the Corporate Team on future strategies
- Establishing relevant metrics for impact measurement
- Assessing performance and progress against our sustainability targets
- Measuring and reporting our sustainability performance
- Collecting and reviewing stakeholder feedback
- Acting as champions to promote sustainability in daily business activities and our community.

## OUR VISION, MISSION AND VALUES [GRI 102-16]

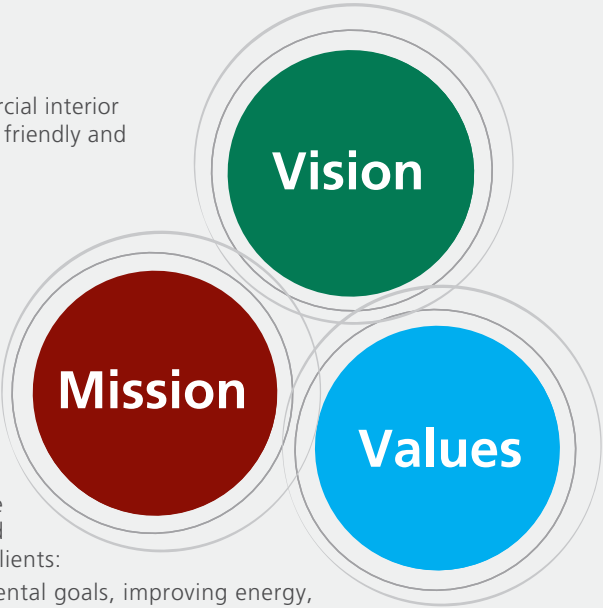
### Our Vision

Our vision is to build commercial interior spaces in an environmentally friendly and sustainable way.

### Our Mission

Our mission is to consistently deliver high end sustainable interior projects on time and within budget, which help clients:

- Achieve their environmental goals, improving energy, water and resource efficiency for buildings
- Create inspiring workplaces to enhance employee health and happiness
- Deliver operational savings, increasing building value and decrease utility costs



### Our Values

- Quality - devotion and attention to consistency and detail
- Socially responsible organisation - employee friendly and implementing sustainable business practices
- Continuous improvement in everything we do, never being satisfied
- Diversity - opportunity to achieve based on merit. Equal job and career opportunities regardless of religion, race, gender, or nationality
- Effectiveness and efficiency - prioritising, and doing things well



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## What matters most to our stakeholders





Summertown has a wide range of stakeholders which have been identified by our management team. In 2015 we conducted a materiality assessment to understand what matters most to our stakeholders, business and wider society and planet. This enabled us to identify and prioritise the topics which reflect our economic, environmental and social impact and which influence stakeholders’ assessments and decisions. The outcome of this assessment informs our strategy, activities and the topics included within this report [GRI 120-45, 102-46, 102-47].

The following table outlines our key stakeholder groups, how we typically engage with these groups and some of the topics and feedback we received this year, which we will use to continually review and revise our strategy and approach [GRI 102-40, 102-42, 102-43, 102-44].

### Our stakeholders, how we engage and what matters most

STAKEHOLDER	HOW WE ENGAGE (ONGOING)	TOPICS WHICH MATTER MOST	ENGAGEMENT THIS YEAR (2020-2021)
 Clients	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Website</li><li>• Company e-newsletter</li><li>• Presentations</li><li>• Seminars, workshops and events</li><li>• Media</li><li>• Tender processes</li><li>• Customer feedback forms</li><li>• Sustainability report.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Company information</li><li>• Project experience</li><li>• Sustainability benefits and tips</li><li>• Environmental performance</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Client survey<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- 100% projects delivered on time</li><li>- 100% of projects met or exceeded expectations</li><li>- 86% of clients agreed onsite HSE was very good or excellent</li><li>- 14% of clients said Summertown’s sustainable/green credentials influenced their decision to appoint Summertown as their contractor</li></ul></li><li>• Client feedback taken and implemented into our systems<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Improve coordination between site management team</li><li>- Increase handover support</li></ul></li></ul>
 Suppliers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Website</li><li>• Pre-qualification processes</li><li>• HSE assessments</li><li>• Vendor forums</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Payment terms</li><li>• HSE best practices and assessments</li><li>• Sustainability best practices and assessments</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No specific engagement this year</li></ul>
 Employee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Website</li><li>• Meetings</li><li>• Company events and meetings</li><li>• Training and workshops</li><li>• Staff surveys – occupancy comfort and satisfaction</li><li>• Staff recognition</li><li>• Wellness programme</li><li>• Volunteering</li><li>• Sustainability report</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Company information and policies</li><li>• Self-improvement and career development opportunities</li><li>• Health and wellbeing of staff in the workplace</li><li>• Community investment and volunteering opportunities</li><li>• Embedding sustainability practices</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• See Employee workplace happiness &amp; wellbeing survey case study.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- 74% response rate</li><li>- The most popular idea for improving wellbeing and happiness was to bring back the wellbeing programme. 38% of respondents felt happy that no improvement was needed</li></ul></li><li>• See WELL Health-Safety accreditation case study</li><li>• Office-based employees undertook training in <i>Breathing techniques, Dealing with Uncertainty, Emergency First Aid, New ways of working, New technologies as well as PDP completions.</i></li><li>• Site employees undertook training in <i>Fire Safety Fundamentals and Proper use of Fire Extinguishers</i></li></ul>

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	 Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Website</li> <li>Meetings (formal and informal)</li> <li>Seminars and events</li> <li>Media</li> <li>Tender processes</li> <li>Site visits</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Company information</li> <li>Project experience</li> <li>Industry best practices</li> <li>Business accolades and awards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The United Workplace leadership meeting took place online</li> </ul>
	 Government / Regulators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trade licenses</li> <li>Certifications and membership of associations</li> <li>Financial reports</li> <li>Sustainability reports</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Company information</li> <li>Economic performance</li> <li>Environmental performance</li> <li>Community investment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Feedback from the Dubai Chamber of Commerce</li> <li>Our performance on workplace topics</li> <li>Community was identified as areas for future improvement in particular measuring impact of volunteering</li> <li>External audit</li> </ul>
	 Investors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Financial reports</li> <li>Sustainability report</li> <li>Shareholder meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Company performance</li> <li>Economic performance</li> <li>Environmental performance</li> <li>Business accolades and awards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual shareholder meeting to review business performance and impact of COVID-19 held in June 2020</li> <li>Annual company audited financial reports prepared.</li> </ul>
	 Other including community partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Guest lectures and workshops</li> <li>Employee volunteering</li> <li>Student visits and internship programme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Our support to their activities</li> <li>Best practice sustainability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We could not participate in any community volunteering activities due COVID-19 restrictions</li> <li>June 2020 – Summertown Managing Director was interviewed by Dubai Eye Business Breakfast radio about encouraging companies to ‘Rethink the Workspace’ as employees Return to Work</li> <li>Summertown Projects Director spoke with ‘Love that Design’ and ‘Workspace’ about her career, being a working mother of four children and working from home during the pandemic</li> <li>Business Management Student conducted a research project on ‘What strategies should Summertown implement to maintain employee well-being with the shift to hybrid-remote working?’ The primary research included interviews and surveys</li> </ul>



# REPORT PROFILE

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Like our last report we have followed, wherever possible, Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) standards and indicators and look forward to being able to produce next year’s report in accordance with the GRI Standards: Core option [GRI 102-54]. The GRI is an independent international organisation that has pioneered sustainability reporting since 1997. The GRI Sustainability Reporting Standards (GRI Standards) are the first and most widely adopted global standards for sustainability reporting.

This is our sixth sustainability report and it covers the period from 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021. For previous reports see [www.summertown.ae/sustainability](http://www.summertown.ae/sustainability). During the reporting period there were no significant changes to the organisation’s, locations, financial structure, ownership, or its supply chain. The report includes the material activities and operations of all the financial entities owned by Summertown Holdings Limited, a private limited company registered in Jersey, UK<sup>31</sup> [GRI 102-10, 102-45, 102-48, 102-49, 102-50, 102-51, 102-54].

It is our intention to continue reporting against the same criteria on an annual basis. The contact point for further information is Marcos Bish, Summertown Interiors Managing Director - email: [Marcos@summertown.ae](mailto:Marcos@summertown.ae) [GRI 102-52, 102-53].

## CONTENT INDEX (REFERENCING GRI INDICATORS)

The following table provides an index for the location of all the GRI topics represented by performance indicators within this report. There are no restatements, or significant changes from previous reporting periods to consider [GRI 102-47, 102-48, 102-49, 102-53, 102-54, 102-56].

<sup>31</sup> Trading offices: Summertown International LLC, PO Box 43530, Abu Dhabi, UAE; Summertown Interiors LLC, PO Box 262807, Dubai, UAE. [GRI 102-5]





# CONTENT INDEX (REFERENCING GRI INDICATORS) [GRI 102-55]

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# CONTENT INDEX (REFERENCING GRI INDICATORS) [GRI 102-55]

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External assurance	102-56	Page 48

<sup>32</sup> Employee associations, such as unions and collective bargaining are not present in the UAE [GRI 102-41]

# CONTENT INDEX (REFERENCING GRI INDICATORS) [GRI 102-55]

	INDICATORS	GRI CODE	RELEVANT	MATERIALITY THRESHOLD	BOUNDARY OF ASPECT			PAGE REFERENCE
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	Total water withdrawal	303-1	Y	Y	P	P	-	Page 19
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	Direct greenhouse emissions	305-1	Y	Y	P	P	-	Page 18
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OUR MATERIAL ISSUES	<b>Effluents and Waste</b>							
	Total waste by type, disposal, etc.	306-2	Y	Y	P	P	-	Page 19
GOVERNANCE	<b>Employment</b>							
	Employee turnover analysis	401-1	Y	Y	P	-	-	Page 23
OUR STAKEHOLDERS	<b>Occupational Health and Safety</b>							
	Rates of injury, disease, etc.	403-2	Y	Y	P	P	P	Page 3, 28 & 29
REPORT PROFILE	<b>Training and Education</b>							
	Average hours training	404-1	Y	Y	P	P	-	Page 23
	Diversity of governance bodies	405-1	Y	Y	P	-	-	Page 45
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	% of suppliers screened for labour practices	414-1	Y	Y	-	-	P	Page 34
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	Communication and training about anti-corruption policies and procedures	205-2	Y	Y	P	P	P	Page 44



