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HOW COVID IS TURBO CHARGING THE MOVE TO NEW WORKING PRACTICES AND THE WELLBEING ECONOMY IN THE WORKSPACE ENVIRONMENT

Creating innovative, people-focused workspaces designed to accommodate new working practices in sustainable structures within a wellbeing environment.

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FOREWORD

Ian Davies

Founder, iamNetwork Consultancy

Ian Davies founder of the iamNetwork consultancy and instigator of this white paper has previously worked at the European Blue Building Institute near Amsterdam and BRE Building Research Establishment in London. He is a knowledgeable and passionate advocate for the wellbeing economy in the built environment. His consultancy also works closely with companies and organisations to promote the development of sustainable, people-centric “well” buildings. These workspaces incorporate designs, materials and technology to create an environment which enhances and helps maintain occupier’s health and wellbeing in an environment which enhances job satisfaction, improves staff retention and measurably improves productivity.

The original concept of this white paper, when it was proposed towards the end of 2019, was to raise awareness of the wellbeing economy and accelerate it’s take up within the industry. At the time the Covid pandemic had not yet started. It began to take hold seriously at the start of 2020. Ian Davies’ plan was to involve the input of a small advisory group of senior industry professionals to inform the process and lend weight to the arguments through their experience and opinions.

The Contributors

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During the first meetings of the Advisory Group the white paper was discussed along with its basic premise and objectives. However, it quickly became apparent that, whilst the white paper’s original concept (the acceleration of the wellbeing economy) was completely valid it had to be broadened to include the then and now more pressing matters facing the industry and the “return to the office” process post Covid.

Those first meetings of the Advisory Group identified very clearly that pre-Covid the industry had serious issues to resolve which would require major changes in working practices and work locations. As time went on Covid demanded many changes in the ways we work in order to control the pandemic. In particular, these included working from home, not offices, and caused a serious debate on the future of work and the workplace.

This debate spread to all aspects of how the industry should work after Covid and meant that the white paper’s remit had to change. It could no longer be a single issue discussion but had to become an overview of the industry – how it worked pre-Covid, what was happening during Covid and how it must change post-Covid to incorporate the well-being economy. In addition to the virtual meetings and “round table” discussions, each member of the Advisory Group has also contributed their own personal responses for this white paper to some of the key points discussed for the overview.

Instead of presenting a problem and then suggesting a solution the white paper has changed to be a focus point, a platform, to discuss some of the biggest changes the industry has ever seen and how Covid has been and continues to be, the catalyst to make these changes happen.

Therefore, the identification of a number of industrywide problems and debate provoking solutions is now the task of this white paper. What became a strategy to combat Covid is rapidly confirming the strengths of adopting the wellbeing economy and its role in the future of the built environment post-Covid.

Making workspaces future ready starts now using the post-Covid landscape as a catalyst for overdue change

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

1/ OBJECTIVES

2/ LIFE BEFORE COVID – Areas for concern

Kay Sargent, FASID, FIIDA, CID, LEED®AP, MCR.W, WELL AP, Senior Principal, Director of WorkPlace, HOK, Washington, USA

3/ LIFE DURING COVID – It's all about feeling safe

Ian Davies, Founder, IamNetwork Consultancy, London, UK

4/ LIFE AFTER THE PANDEMIC

Kay Killmann, Managing Director, GBCI Europe (Green Business Certification Institute), Munich, Germany.

5/ THE ECONOMIC POWER OF HEALTH AND WELLBEING – The case for the wellbeing economy

Chris Pyke, Senior Vice President, US Green Building Council and Arc Skoru, Washington, USA

6/ INVESTING IN HEALTH, WELL-BEING AND EQUITY – THE TIME IS NOW

Dr. Matthew Trowbridge, Chief Medical Officer, International WELL Building Institute (IWBI), Washington, DC, USA

7/ EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ian Davies Founder, IamNetwork Consultancy, London, UK

THE WELLBEING ECONOMY WHITE PAPER

OBJECTIVES

- 1/ To integrate within the development of the wellbeing economy the lessons learned from the Covid pandemic of measures to be taken to ensure a safe environment for the management of Covid and any other future pandemics.
- 2/ To create a discussion of how the structure and working practices of the workspace environment should develop to meet the logistical needs of all who work in the industry. In particular, hybrid ways of working in different environments. For example, the “HUB, SPOKE and HOME” concept of workspace choices.
- 3/ To support the compelling case for the adoption of the principles of the wellbeing economy as the ongoing standard for the built environment.





LIFE BEFORE COVID – Areas for Concern

**Kay Sargent, FASID, FIIDA, CID, LEED® AP, MCR.W, WELL AP, Senior Principal,
Director of WorkPlace, HOK, Washington, USA**

COVID-19 has given us all an opportunity to rethink something we have taken as set for decades – the way we work. And many are rethinking a fundamental question – what is the future of work, the workplace and the workforce? The pandemic has also given us an opportunity to not only answer that question but to also address the issues that we have struggled with in the past and the issues that lie ahead so we can be future ready.

- Stress and burnout are at an all-time high. Work-life balance is out of sync and the workforce is largely unengaged. The health and wellbeing of our largest asset, our people, is suffering. Commuting, stressful work environment, inflexible working hours – these all lead to low motivation, reduced job satisfaction and employee engagement and productivity issues.
- Climate change needs to be addressed more holistically and time is of the essence. We need to go beyond simply ticking the boxes for certification and tackle these issues more holistically.
- Under-utilized, inflexible office space is abundant and needs to be addressed. We need to define the purpose of place, create compelling spaces people want to be in and enable more rapid change.
- Social inequity needs to be addressed to ensure we are creating diverse, inclusive, welcoming and humane spaces for all.
- Social connection is core to who we are because as social creatures we thrive when we are together. But we need to ensure people feel safe and empower them with options, choice and control.

- The rapid evolution of technology is exponentially having both a positive and negative impact on spaces and people, and we need to ensure balance.
- The focus on productivity needs to shift to a focus on innovation to ensure business continuity and relevance.
- Cleanliness has always been an issue, we are much more acutely aware of it now. We need to design spaces that inherently address cleanliness and durability and look for opportunities to reduce touchpoints.
- The need to upskill/ retain workforce to keep them relevant over the course of their careers requires that we embed life-long learning opportunities, enable mentoring and transfer of knowledge, and rethink when, where and how we work.
- Existing offices are often stuck in the past working on out of date criteria of people/costs/space ratios and ROI structures
- Many workplaces are “one size fits all” and not designed to meet the specific needs of today’s workforce.

But we have an opportunity to not only be reactive to the pandemic but proactive in reimagining work going forward. We believe the notion of “returning to the office” is flawed.

We believe we need to acknowledge the things that were not working before the pandemic and truly address what is broken as we move forward. We believe we need to evolve beyond the singular concept of “an office” to one that we can reimagine as an “ecosystem of spaces” that truly addresses our needs - now and in the future. We believe we need to address the disruption in the market and rethink how we can best meet all our needs moving forward.

1. Returning to the office of yesterday is not the answer.
2. We need to evolve to a new system where the “office” is replaced with an “ecosystem” of spaces.
3. We need to empower people with options and choices to fit the array of needs today.
4. We need to shift from fixed to fluid and create environments.
5. We need to rethink the purpose of place and create compelling environments, fit for purpose, that entice people to be there.
6. Access is the new ownership.
7. We should leverage technology to reduce touchpoints and create spaces that are more responsive to individuals.

We foresee the development of a new ecosystem of space, a Hub-Home-Spoke model.

1. HUB - The heart of the organization. The physical embodiment of the culture and the place where staff come together to connect with each other and clients. The hub serves as an engagement center and innovation hub. It's the space where you get the premier experience, the best technologies, access to others, amenities and services you can't get elsewhere.
2. SPOKE - Serves as a place where staff can come together in a casual atmosphere to connect primarily with colleagues and clients. This space also serves as a gathering space and individual workspaces for those not needing to be at the Hub and seeking more than the home environment may offer. It might offer more work point options, better technology and ergonomics and access to others.
3. HOME - Remote work capacities for those that either can't or choose not to come into a centralized location. These spaces serve as a place where staff can do heads-down concentrative work, focus or remote into virtual meetings when a physical presence is not required.

COVID-19 will have a lasting impact on workplace design. In the immediate future we will see a continuation of caution regarding the return to shared workplaces. Physical distancing, masking, enhanced cleaning, and reducing touchpoints will all be part of our lives for the coming months. But there will also be some long-lasting implications in our shared common spaces because of COVID. Those will likely include:

1. Increased remote work programs driving an ecosystem of spaces.
2. More choice, options and spacing with unassigned work points.
3. Enhanced lobbies that serve as transition spaces and workplaces.
4. Increased shielding and dividers to create boundaries.
5. More storage space for personal items and supplies.
6. Enhanced HVAC, air filtration and increased air exchange.
7. Increased use of technology to reduce touchpoints.
8. Reworked restrooms to increase sanitation and increase handwashing capacity.
9. Greater variation of meeting/gathering spaces.
10. More outside space for working and refreshing.
11. Tighter visitor controls and restrictions.
12. A new minimalism as items are put away to reduce and enable enhanced cleaning.

We need to embrace the opportunity to address the disruption being brought forth and proactively rethink how we can best serve our clients, companies and the workforce. We need to innovate and evolve. Now is the time for us to be bold, to cast a wide net, and to take on new ways of work in the truest sense. Now is the time to design with courage so we can innovate and evolve.



LIFE DURING COVID – It's all about feeling safe

Ian Davies, Founder, iamNetwork Consultancy, London, UK

When the Covid Pandemic started and spread around the world little was known about the virus and every country and society in general faced a massive learning curve. In order to understand how best to fight it we had to find out, as quickly as possible, it's key factors including: How does it spread? What are the symptoms? How serious is the infection? Can it kill? Who are the most vulnerable?..... and much more.

At first, many people were sceptical and believed it was just a type of flu but over time the majority of people realised just how serious this infection was and that it really was a truly global pandemic threatening us all on so many levels – especially in our working lives. Every country started trying to help and treat those infected by the virus and, critically, medical services shared their findings and experiences. At the same time a race began urgently to create a vaccine against the Coronavirus Covid 19.

The result of this shared activity was that as we learned more about the virus we also learned more about possible defences to mount against it and future pandemics.

These are the key Covid 19 factors we discovered:

-Like most respiratory infections the Covid 19 virus mainly spreads through airborne particles (droplets) and even smaller particles called aerosols exhaled from the nose and mouth of infected people as they breathe, speak, cough or sneeze. These droplets and aerosols are then inhaled by people nearby spreading the Covid 19 infection.

-Some Covid droplets and aerosols also fall onto various surfaces in the vicinity such as door handles, key pads, desktops, control panels etc. They then remain live for varying periods of time. When a surface is touched the virus transfers to hands and continues spreading and subsequently finds its way into mouths, noses and eyes to be absorbed into the body.

-The Covid 19 infection thrives in crowded places with close contact.

-Infections are not often transmitted outdoors. The outside air helps dissipate the droplets and aerosols.

-The Covid 19 virus infects the elderly more quickly and with more serious consequences. Generally speaking, the younger a person is the less serious the symptoms are.

Living and Working with Covid

As a result of these findings and more, a number of Covid 19 defence protocols were put into action – some in the form of strong government health advice and others as legal mandatory requirements enforced by the police. Reducing opportunities for person to person contact is key... These protocols include:

- The most severe defence protocol is a total or partial lockdown of a region or an entire country. Under this, people are not allowed to leave their homes except for a few vital and controlled exceptions e.g. essential food shopping, medical reasons, limited local individual exercise.
- People are advised to work from home wherever possible and only go to work if essential or unavoidable. Then, wear face coverings, keep two metres distance from others and wash/sanitise hands often.
- All forms of public transport to be avoided where possible.
- All non-essential shops, businesses, events and hospitality venues to be closed.
- If people leave their houses during major restrictions rules must be adhered to including:
 - The wearing of approved face coverings (masks covering nose and mouth). This helps prevent the transmission of infections.
 - A distance of 2 metres between people must be maintained. This ensures minimum personal contact and reduces virus transmission.
 - In indoor environments rigid clear plastic screens to be erected to create space between people, desks, counters and queues etc. to disrupt airflow and contact to help reduce virus transmission.
 - All locations to provide a supply of liquid dispenser hand sanitisers to destroy the virus on hands. In addition, it is essential to wash hands regularly.
 - Direction of flow routes to be set up and clearly signed to keep people moving in the same directions to avoid crowding and bottlenecks e.g. inside and outside of essential shops, banks, health clinics. transport hubs etc.

To ensure each of these measures is adhered to and legally enforced where necessary every protocol is clearly and repeatedly signed with notices, posters, hazard tape and personal supervision. Sadly, the effect of this for many people creates the feeling that in personal environments and work spaces everywhere is a danger zone where nothing feels safe.

The Impact on Everyday Life During Covid

The Covid pandemic and its attendant rules, restrictions, lockdowns and other defence protocols come at enormous cost. Not just financially but personally and emotionally through a complete dislocation of a nation's life. No one feels truly safe. Illness, deaths, personal tragedies and separations are all manifestations of life during Covid. Living with these circumstances and ever-present stress also causes a significant increase in mental health issues. Workspaces and the built environment have almost certainly been changed forever. However, this has a positive side. In the commercial real estate industry things were certainly not perfect pre-Covid in many areas. Clever organisations will use Covid as a catalyst for change so in the long run life can come back better and safer.

There are two positive things in particular emerging from all the negatives and damaging impacts of life during Covid. Firstly, the arrival of a quite remarkably rapid creation of new vaccines and mass inoculation. This has enabled a start to coming out of defence protocols and pandemic restrictions into the management phase of Covid within everyday life and work.

Secondly, the massive impetus this pandemic has given to the now essential creation and implementation of healthy working environments to improve everyone's well-being.

Lessons Learned from Life During a Pandemic

With the knowledge and experience gained through life under Covid and the technologies continuously being developed to create Covid resistant environments lives should never again be held to ransom by future pandemics.

However, to achieve this it is essential to immediately harness the impetus and desire for change whilst the memory of life during Covid is still strong and embrace the move to the well-being economy and its life enhancing capabilities.

This is just a small sample of currently available workplace technologies which must become the 'norm' in our acceleration into the well-being economy to transform both new and existing buildings:

- Technology to monitor and control air-handling systems which filter out particulate matter and feature the integration of fresh clean air.
- "No touch" controls to prevent virus transmission by keyboards, touchpads and other control and activation devices.

- Manage the flow of people throughout the building to avoid build up in any one particular area.
- Development of agreed well-being standards and systems with third party certification.
- Utilise a programme of sustainability throughout a building along with use of non-polluting materials in terms of coatings, materials and the specification of bacteria and virus free surfaces.
- Employers to share responsibility for the use of safe home working protocols along with the provision of advanced work and communication technologies and the use of increased training and well-being mentoring.

The challenge designers' face moving forward from life during Covid will be to create new environments keeping workspaces safe, productive and pleasurable within the principles of the wellbeing economy.





LIFE AFTER THE PANDEMIC

**Kay Killmann, Managing Director,
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Infectious diseases have long played a role in shaping our built environment. The Spanish Flu epidemic of the early twentieth century influenced the design and operation of public buildings—specifically health care facilities—in the decades that followed. Covid-19, like the Spanish Flu, has been a disruptor to our entrenched way of thinking. How do we respond? How do we protect the occupants of and visitors to our spaces from airborne pathogens? Do we “harden” our buildings to withstand outbreaks much like they might a flood or fire? Adversity creates opportunity. How will we “build back better”?

Although the global vaccine rollout continues in earnest, Covid-19 is expected to be a part of our lives for the foreseeable future. We may be able to manage impact like we now do with influenza, but the way we live and work needs to retain the best practices developed through the peak of the pandemic. The future of the office requires this behavioural change and a physical/operational form of support.

Safe social distancing, for example, could be bolstered by a space-oriented to prevent overcrowding. Digital infrastructure—think mobile apps and smart buildings—can simultaneously improve performance and safety. While transmission of Covid-19 on surfaces has been proven recently to be less a threat than initially believed, this is not the case for all diseases and touchless technology will remain key. (The market already offers coatings and antimicrobial paints which kill or reduce the build-up of bacteria.) Monitoring protocols may not test every occupant every day but testing every building every day may be reasonable if not advisable.

Equally important to these measures is the perception of these measures. The future of the office hinges on a collaborative approach between operator and occupant with clear communication essential and transparency vital. This is the case with any behaviour change model. Behaviour change relies on trust.

While Covid-19 has challenged traditions in building design and operation, it has also expanded our definition of “workspace”. “Working from home” may be one of the most transformative outcomes to emerge from the pandemic. As the formerly office-bound seek a better work-life balance, a desire for working from home is likely not to diminish, meaning hybrid schedules may become a best practice for many organizations and individuals.

How should workplaces change in support of these new motivations?

The “Hub” model sees the creation of satellite offices which connect to a regional office. The ecosystem of workspaces – home, satellite and regional – is utilized depending on need and to maximize the health and well-being of people in the network. Regional offices may offer space for collaboration, meetings, idea development, training or socializing – indoor or outdoor, depending on the availability. (Offering more step-out balconies and terraces adjacent to offices and conference rooms could be one design approach to maximize time in safer, outdoor environments.) Spaces designed for individuals within regional or satellite offices could be shared and cleaned with scheduling apps and renovated as enclosed, well-ventilated offices or high-panel cubicles to minimize unnecessary interaction and Covid-19 spread.

The Covid-driven evolution of the workplace will have tremendous effects on health and well-being, and, symbiotically, the green well-being economy. These may manifest in a transition of the workplace from central monolith to distributed network or a forced examination of temperature, light and air quality and other pillars in a healthy environment.

As teams look to better manage airborne particles, as an example, with improved ventilation, fresh air and mechanical filtration, air conditioning systems can be modified to increase capacity for capture of smaller particles and moisture. Complemented with living walls or indoor gardens, suddenly a strategy to combat Covid looks like one to optimize health and wellness. Establishing human-scale health and wellness protocols which span design, technology and behavioural considerations creates asset value and advantages over competitors.

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THE ECONOMIC POWER OF HEALTH AND WELLBEING – The case for the wellbeing economy

Chris Pyke, Senior Vice President, U.S. Green Building Council and Arc Skoru, Washington, USA

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought unprecedented attention to the role of spaces, buildings, and places in the spread of infectious disease. This quickly and dramatically changed the prevailing narrative about productivity and comfort to something more fundamental and acute. The drivers and implications of this shift have been addressed by other authors. Here we will zoom out and consider the economic implications of health and wellbeing. We will consider three scales: national economies, local economies, and individual firms. There are many differences across these scales. It is useful to identify two similarities: (1) Health impacts are often an “externality” to policy or business strategy. (2) Addressing these issues with a systematic management process can reduce negative health impacts and create positive economic benefits. The following sections elaborate on these ideas and provide specific examples for inspiration.

National Economies

Let’s start zoomed out to the national scale. More specifically, we will consider the impact of wellbeing on national banking systems. In the U.S., the Congress directs the Federal Reserve (1) to support the goals of maximum employment and stable prices -- the so-called “dual mandate”. Conventionally, the Federal Reserve is driven by economists and financiers, apparently far removed from the domain of medicine, public health, and wellbeing.

However, over the last decade, a significant and influential cross-section of Federal Reserve leaders have recognized important connections between public health and well-being and the Federal Reserve’s dual-mandate. The critical link is realization that workforce participation and productivity are closely tied to health and well-being. Moreover, Federal Reserve leaders have come to appreciate that the majority of health outcomes are driven by social and environmental factors outside of healthcare. In other words, the Federal Reserve’s mandate to maximize employment is directly tied to public health, which, in turn, is largely determined by where and how people live, work, play, and learn.

This simple, but profound, chain of logic has motivated a series of high-impact initiatives related to community development and, more broadly, the social determinants of health (Nichols and Taylor 2018). These efforts attempt to align public and private investment with public health and well-being outcomes inside and outside the “fenceline” of community development projects. These efforts are often prioritized based on community needs assessments or, in some instances, health impact assessments. They lead to both physical and programmatic interventions, such as housing renovations and access to medical care.

References:

(1) <https://www.federalreserve.gov/>

The Build Healthy Places Network (2) shares examples of this kind of targeted community development efforts. For example, the Network shared experiences such as the Healthy Neighbourhoods Equity Fund (3). This investment vehicle uses a proprietary targeting score to identify property development opportunities that promote community health and wellbeing, while generating returns from a combination of rental income and asset value. The investment vehicle has demonstrated measurable improvements in health and wellbeing and significant returns to its investors.

Local Economies

Local governments lack the sweeping mandate and powers of the Federal Reserve. However, they often have central roles in the design and operation of built environments. Critically, local governments -- cities, counties, and similar jurisdictions -- realize that health and well-being are vital to local economic prosperity and local government liabilities. Prosperity requires a healthy and productive workforce. In most cases, this is enabled by quality housing, safe schools, access to services, and similar features enabled by and reflected in our built environments. Conversely, low-quality built environments often directly contribute to local liabilities, such as the need for health care, special education services, increased policing, and more.

These efforts are frequently guided by community-level data, such as County Health Rankings or the Centres for Disease Control PLACES database (4). These resources provide community-specific information areas of high and low health performance. This information can be used to prioritize health promotion strategies, including housing, employment, pollution abatement, social services, healthcare, and more. This supports more efficient, targeted interventions that meet local conditions and population needs. The most effective efforts back up these actions with systematic monitoring to understand real world outcomes and improve over time.

The City of Santa Monica, California's Wellbeing Project (5) provides an exemplary case study. The City aspired to make wellbeing central to local planning and operations. The effort was distinguished by its comprehensive, data-driven approach. Program administrators started with a systematic effort to understand health needs, and they used this information to prioritize actions. Critically, this was not a once-and-done effort. City leadership established high-level goals for wellbeing and worked iteratively to improve performance over time. The result was demonstrably better experiences for residents and a replicable model for local governments around the world.

Firms

Health and the economy are also intimately connected at smaller scales, for example, individual firms. At this scale, connections between health, firm-level financial performance, and the built environment are particularly clear and direct. Firms thrive by using capital to turn labour into revenue and, ultimately, profits. This means that top-line revenue and bottom line financial performance are inseparable from the health and productivity of their team.

Firms are discovering two complementary types of top-line benefits. First, action to promote health and wellbeing make firms more efficient and productive: employees are more engaged, less distracted, and more "present". Second, many firms are using a focus on health and well-being to create better, more desirable products. The net result is more revenue, higher productivity, and lower overhead. These factors help the bottom line of any business and clearly illustrate the advantages of systematic efforts to promote health and wellbeing across the enterprise.

References:

(2) <https://buildhealthyplaces.org/>

(3) <https://www.hnefund.org/>

(4) <https://www.cdc.gov/places/index.html>

(5) <https://www.oecd.org/gov/innovative-government/embracing-innovation-in-government-united-states.pdf>

Collaborative research between GRESB, the University of Virginia, School of Medicine, and the U.S. Green Building Council has tracked the rapid evolution of these strategies across the global property industry. Results from the GRESB Health & Wellbeing Module (a supplement to the GRESB Real Estate Assessment)(6) show a clear progression from “internal” health promotion to offering “external” products and services to customers. It also shows that despite a growing set of ambitious leaders, most property companies have incomplete and fragmented approaches to managing health promotion opportunities. For example, many firms have health-promotion policies. A smaller number systematically link health needs with on-the-ground strategy execution. Few firms combine clear health-promotion politics, consistent strategy execution, and relevant performance measurement.

Bottom Line

The promotion of health and wellbeing is much more than a high-end amenity. It can be a targeted and effective strategy to manage national economies, support local development, and grow individual firms. These examples only scratch the surface of the opportunities created when we link our understanding of finance, health, and wellbeing across a range of scales. Moreover, these opportunities are rarely limited by technology. Rather, they are constrained only by our ability to see interconnections and act aggressively to create positive outcomes for targeted populations.

References:

(6) <http://gresb-prd-public.s3.amazonaws.com/2018/Assessments-and-Reference-Guides/2018-GRESB-RE-HW-Reference-Guide.pdf>



INVESTING IN HEALTH, WELL-BEING AND EQUITY – THE TIME IS NOW

**Dr. Matthew Trowbridge, Chief Medical Officer
International WELL Building Institute (IWBI), Washington, DC, USA**

From 2009 to 2014, something quietly revolutionary happened in the real estate industry: the portion of GRESB participants who tracked their buildings' energy consumption increased from 19 percent to 79 percent. We all saw what happened next: because companies could measure progress, and investors could reward it, buildings got greener, fast. Better metrics and more attention helped real estate companies construct and operate buildings in ways that support the health of our planet. I believe the industry is set up, now, for a similar sea change in creating buildings that benefit people as well as the planet. In the coming years, we'll see real estate companies taking far greater action to support health, well-being and equity in their communities—and investors increasingly rewarding these behaviours.

There is, of course, an obvious catalyst for this shift: the COVID-19 pandemic, which has made the consequences of failing to invest in healthy spaces plain. But often, moments of crisis simply accelerate existing trends. That's certainly the case for the healthy building and communities movement, which had been steadily growing for years before the pandemic hit.

Six years ago, my colleagues at the Green Health Partnership and I partnered with GRESB to create the GRESB Health & Well-being Module as a voluntary addendum to the GRESB Real Estate Assessment. The reception was overwhelming. Fully 10 times as many companies as our research team expected completed the voluntary assessment, and over just the first few years of tracking, they reported significant progress in their health, well-being and equity efforts. So, in 2019, GRESB integrated health and well-being metrics into the core assessment.

In the coming years, we expect to see more and better tracking on these metrics, fueling faster progress and greater investment.

Companies eager to differentiate themselves will recognize that focusing on health, well-being and equity is more than just a requirement for continued success in the post-pandemic world—it's an opportunity for enormous value creation. Unhealthy workers cost the economy roughly \$234 billion in lost productivity every year. Meanwhile, happy, healthy employees are more productive, make better decisions and are more creative.

And of course, beyond the benefits to business, happier, healthier people make for a happier, healthier society. Now is the time to build on our momentum and join in the global movement to integrate health, well-being and equity into everything our enterprises do. Personally, I'm excited to further that mission in my new role as Chief Medical Officer at the International WELL Building Institute. After nearly 14 years as a physician, public health researcher, and Associate Professor at the University of Virginia School of Medicine, it's a privilege to be applying my experiences in the field at an organization that's dedicated to helping companies create people-first places.

If we're to succeed in reimagining places across the globe to foster health, happiness and equity, it'll take every one of us prioritizing well-being and advocating change in our work and daily lives. I look forward to seeing you out there.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ian Davies, Founder, iamNetwork Consultancy, London, UK

This white paper was instigated by Ian Davies of the iamNetwork Consultancy to inform the debate for the future of the built environment to be developed on the basis and principles of the Wellbeing Economy. This would ensure that, going forward, buildings, both new-build and existing would be sustainable and energy efficient. Most importantly however, they would be people centric to ensure that at their heart they would incorporate design, materials and technology to provide a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of their occupants.

However, to ensure the debate was grounded in the real world and was informed by a professional and experienced body of opinion the iamNetwork Consultancy invited four highly respected industry professionals to take part as a guiding advisory group. This group proved the wisdom of their appointment by immediately challenging the stated remit of the white paper. They made the point that this drive to embrace the well-being economy had now to be placed not in isolation, but in the context and reality of an industry facing the Covid 19 pandemic and also struggling with the need for some long overdue changes to the way the industry worked in "Life Before Covid". On the advisory group's advice this white paper has therefore examined the state of the industry pre Covid to identify existing problems.

The white paper then placed this reality into "Life During Covid" and how the fight against Covid had actually enhanced the need for change by exposing how the buildings in which people spent a huge amount of their time actually hindered the drive to create and maintain Covid free working spaces.

The section on "Life After Covid" shows clearly how making changes in order to live with ongoing virus infections is not a new thing in the world and how and which kind of changes we must make to adapt to "Life After Covid".

Finally, the white paper looks at how the move to the well-being economy can also benefit the bottom line as it discusses "The Economic Power of Health and Wellbeing" - the case for the Wellbeing Economy.

WATCH OUT FOR 'PART TWO' OF THIS WHITE PAPER – COMING SOON

The covid pandemic and its far-reaching consequences continue to evolve. The whitepaper continues this discussion in part two.

The “return to work” process after the pandemic is a watershed moment for any company or organisation with people and premises. This White Paper is PART ONE of how Covid is turbocharging the move to new working practices and the wellbeing economy in the workspace environment.

Now watch out for PART TWO - the impact of the Covid legacy on society, life and work – where we go from here as our working practices and locations evolve and potentially change forever. In PART TWO the discussion will include the following:

- The impact to cities with the surge in the suburbs and the doughnut effect.
- The emergence of the liquid workforce as many people have moved and want to continue working remotely.
- The early exodus of those on the verge of retirement, lack of handover and brain drain.
- The mental health impact of isolation and loneliness.
- The disproportionate number of women and minorities forced to exit the workforce.
- The erosion of social capital and collaboration.
- The negative impact of the lack of movement and well-appointed ergonomic spaces on our physical health and wellbeing.
- The imbalance between older, more established knowledge workers with means and access to infrastructure compared to the younger generation, essential workers and/or those less well-off or with limited access to infrastructure and support.
- The impact of being glued to your laptop with back-to-back meetings and zoom doom.
- The impact on the environment due to increase in PPE, single-use material, abundance of delivery traffic and packaging, drop in use of mass transit and the increased use of less energy-efficient dwellings vs commercial buildings.

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