

Evaluation of the Better Buildings Cup

Final

May 2021

Author:
Patrick Crittenden
Director, Sustainable Business Group Pty Ltd
patrick@sbusiness.com.au, 0418 453779



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Executive Summary

The Better Buildings Cup Pilot Program (referred to as the 'Cup' in this evaluation) was conducted by the Cities of Sydney and Perth between March 2019 and March 2020. 5 commercial buildings and 2 commercial building precincts were involved. Within the total of 14 buildings that took part, 81 companies and 516 individuals participated.

The aim of the Cup was to encourage commercial building stakeholders, including property owners, property managers, tenant organisations and individual building occupants, to work together to improve 'whole building' sustainability performance. Design of the Cup was informed by the latest behavioural change research. Each of the participating buildings and precincts obtained points for implementing sustainability initiatives at 3 different levels: building managers (base building), companies (tenancies) and individuals. A digital platform incorporating a phone-based app and website assisted participants to select and record their actions while providing a real-time comparison of performance.

This evaluation establishes the outcomes from the Cup and draws on the experience of participants to identify what worked well, how the Cup could be improved and future initiatives that could be implemented to support 'whole building' collaboration. The evaluation involves a desktop review of the points data and program material developed by the City of Sydney to administer the Cup together with in-depth, structured interviews with key building stakeholders.

The evaluation found that the Cup was a unique and valuable pilot program that demonstrates how an innovative 'game-based' approach to stakeholder engagement can accelerate sustainability in commercial buildings. Cup outcomes and benefits include:

- Improved collaboration and sense of community within participating buildings
- Improved environmental outcomes
- Personal learning and satisfaction
- Assistance to property managers and tenant representatives to achieve their organisation's sustainability goals
- Confidence, motivation and support amongst building stakeholders for ongoing sustainability initiatives

Each of the design features were found to be effective. For example:

- The competitive, 'game-based' approach was seen to be fun and engaging while encouraging the implementation of sustainability initiatives
- The digital platform supported recruitment, provided a tangible and simple way for participants to plan and take action while enabling comparisons of performance between buildings in real time

- Active program management from the Cities of Sydney and Perth streamlined Cup participation and helped to increase engagement and collaboration between building stakeholders
- Campaign support material made it easier to plan for and implement foyer activations and other stakeholder engagement initiatives.

Overall, there was strong support for running another Cup. Many respondents suggested that future iterations should be delivered as an ongoing program rather than a 'one off' initiative to assist them with planning and to maintain momentum for whole building sustainability.

Respondents also suggested that there was an important need to promote the value and practice of collaboration at the whole building level. They highlighted that there have been limited examples, case studies and blueprints for how to accelerate sustainability performance through stakeholder engagement. The Cup provides many valuable examples and strategies that could be promoted to help others progress their own efforts to improve whole building sustainability. Other recommendations are to utilise a digital platform within other programs such as CitySwitch and for Cities to pilot additional behavioural and stakeholder engagement initiatives at the whole building level.

1. Introduction

The Better Buildings Cup Pilot Program (referred to as the 'Cup' in this report) was delivered by the Cities of Sydney and Perth between March 2019 and March 2020. 5 commercial buildings and 2 commercial building precincts were involved in the Cup. Within the total of 14 buildings that were involved, 81 companies and 516 individuals participated¹.

Funding for the Cup was provided by the City of Sydney, the Better Buildings Partnership (BBP)² and the Carbon Neutral Cities Alliance (CNCA). The City of Sydney managed the overall design and delivery of the Cup and was assisted by the Cities of Perth and Melbourne.

The aim of the Cup was to encourage commercial building stakeholders, including property owners, property managers, tenant organisations and individual building occupants, to work together to improve the sustainability of their building.

When a building first signed up for the Cup it was listed on the Cup's web-based internet platform and phone-based 'app' (collectively referred to as a 'digital platform' in this report). Participants used the digital platform to select from a list of actions they 'had done' or 'planned to do' to improve the sustainability performance of the building.

Points were allocated to each sustainability initiative and were able to be obtained at 3 different levels. The levels are:

- building managers (owners)
- Organisations (tenants)
- Individuals within each organisation.

All cup participants could see the progress of their building compared to others on the digital platform. Each month, building managers and company representatives received a report that summarised their progress relative to the other buildings and encouraged further action.

It was intended that the Cup would conclude in March 2020 with an event to celebrate the achievements of Cup participants. However, the disruption caused by the Covid-19 pandemic meant that Cup activities decreased significantly in February 2020 and there was no formal conclusion to the Cup. In 2021 a recognition event will be held to acknowledge the achievements of all Cup participants.

¹ Source: Building Manager Reports 10 March 2020

² see <https://www.betterbuildingspartnership.com.au/>

1.1 Evaluation methodology

The aim of this evaluation is to:

- establish the outcomes from the Cup
- identify what worked well and how the Cup could be improved
- identify other tenant engagement practices that are being implemented by Cup participants
- gather input from Cup participants on future programs and initiatives that could support improve the sustainability of a 'whole building' through improved stakeholder engagement.

The evaluation involves:

- a desktop review of the points data and program material developed by the City of Sydney to administer the Cup
- interviews with building stakeholders from each of the seven participants that completed the Cup and in two buildings that commenced the programme but later withdrew.

The analysis is primarily qualitative. Qualitative analysis is particularly relevant for the evaluation of a 'pilot' initiative such as the Cup as it can better expose insights into the subjective perceptions and experience of Cup participants. Data from the interviews was transcribed and de-identified prior to analysis. Extensive quotes have been included in this report to share the 'voice' of participants in an accessible way. Some quotes have been edited slightly to improve readability, but care has been taken to ensure that the meaning is maintained. The building locations, roles and type of involvement of each interview respondent is listed in Table 1.

Table 1: Interview respondents

Location	Role	Involvement
100 Harris St Pymont	Office Experience Lead	Tenant
100 Harris St Pymont	Property Manager	Manager
151 Clarence St Sydney	Sustainability manager	Owner
151 Clarence St Sydney	Business Project Manager	Owner
151 Clarence St Sydney	Head of occupant experience	Owner
33 Alfred St Sydney	Sustainability Advisor	Owner
Brookfield Place Tower 2 Perth	National Sustainability Manager	Owner
100 St Georges Terrace Perth	Engineering manager	Manager

No.1 Martin Place Sydney	Sustainability Manager	Owner
Rhodes Corporate Park Rhodes	Property Manager	Manager
Tower 1 Barangaroo Sydney	Tenant prize winner	Individual tenant
Tower 1 Barangaroo Sydney	Sustainability manager	Owner
Towers 2 &3 Barangaroo Sydney	General manager, Sustainability - Assets in Operation	Owner
Towers 2 &3 Barangaroo Sydney	Sustainability Manager, Investment Management	Manager
Tower 3 Barangaroo	Tenant prize winner	Individual tenant
100 St Georges Terrace Perth	Sustainability manager	Owner
Independent consultant	Independent consultant	Sustainability expert
Cup program manager	City of Sydney BBC and CitySwitch manager	Project manager
Cup program manager	City of Perth CitySwitch coordinator	Project manager
Cup program manager	City of Melbourne CitySwitch coordinator	Project manager

1.2 Limitations

There are several limitations to this evaluation. Firstly, the interviews were undertaken almost 12 months after the last major cup activities. It is expected that respondents' recollection of what happened may be less comprehensive than if the interviews were undertaken in closer proximity to Cup activities. Secondly, it was initially intended that a web-based survey would be undertaken. However, following the initial interviews it became clear that it would be difficult to obtain a reasonable response rate from a survey due to the time delay from the completion of Cup activities and the significant disruption caused by the Covid-19 pandemic in the intervening period. Therefore, the web-based survey was not pursued.

1.3 Report structure

This evaluation report is structured as follows:

- Development of the Cup
- Recruiting Cup participants
- Impact and benefits of the Cup
- Perspectives on key design features of the Cup
- Future actions and opportunities

Given that this evaluation provides a unique opportunity to learn about whole building stakeholder engagement, a summary of practical actions that key stakeholders used to support stakeholder engagement around sustainability have been captured in Appendix A. This list of strategies includes those that were implemented within and outside the Cup period.

2. Development of the Cup

The City of Sydney has developed many new and innovative sustainability programs for commercial buildings over the past decade. Two of its flagship programs are the Better Buildings Partnership (BBP) and CitySwitch Green Office.

The BBP is a leading collaboration of property owners, managers and key influencers in the City of Sydney area that meet regularly to identify ways they can collectively progress sustainability in commercial buildings. The 13 members of the BBP have ownership of more than half of the commercial floor space in Sydney's CBD.

CitySwitch Green Office is a national sustainability program for office-based businesses. The program partners with commercial office tenants in the Sydney CBD and around Australia to help them:

- enhance energy efficiency and reduce costs
- manage energy price increases and mitigate business risks
- work towards a carbon positive future
- reduce waste
- improve the health and productivity of employees.

Working groups in the BBP meet regularly to identify opportunities to address barriers and identify opportunities to progress sustainability in commercial offices. One of the key opportunities identified by BBP members, was to improve collaboration between building owners and tenants as a means to unlock sustainability opportunities that are difficult to progress separately. This was seen to be a particularly important focus due to the emerging expectations for commercial building owners to set targets and report on 'whole building sustainability' rather than focusing predominantly on base building sustainability performance.

The BBP commissioned a research project to better understand the ways in which tenants and owners could collaborate more effectively. The report from this research (the 'Tenant Engagement Foundation Report'³) compared and contrasted four major behavioural change research projects. These were:

- the European Commission's Guidelines for behaviour change programs

³ <https://www.betterbuildingspartnership.com.au/resource/engaging-tenants-sustainability/>

(BEHAVE)

- The EAST⁴ approach developed by the UK government's behavioural insights team
- The United States Department of Energy's Strategy Report on Behaviour Change and Building Performance
- The World Business Council for Sustainable Development's research of the influence of stakeholder attitudes and knowledge on the uptake of sustainability initiatives in buildings.

From the review of these research projects, seven design principles for the design of tenant engagement programs were derived. The seven principles are:

1. Know your audience
2. Make it easy
3. Make it attractive
4. Make it social
5. Make it timely
6. Encourage commitment
7. Provide continuity.

Informed by the report, the BBP tenant working group determined that one effective way to apply these behavioural change principles would be to develop a 'competitive game' that would be designed to encourage building stakeholders to work together to improve the sustainability performance of buildings.

The Cup was designed with a **whole building focus**. This was intended to unlock new opportunities for improvement that would be enhanced through collaboration (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Whole building focus

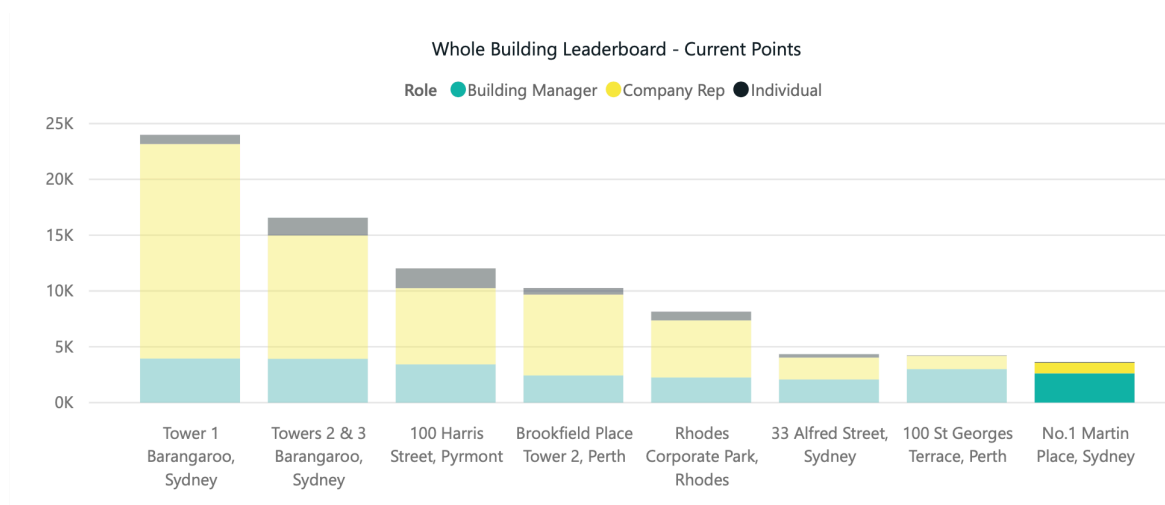


Source: BBC introductory presentation, City of Sydney

Cup operations were organised around a **digital platform** that incorporated a website and phone-app. This mechanism made it easy for participants to 'pledge' the actions that they planned to take and enabled real-time comparison of performance (Figure 2).

⁴ EAST stands for Easy, Attractive, Social and Timely

Figure 2: The Leaderboard as presented on the digital platform in March 2020



Cup participants were supported by **Cup program managers** based in Sydney and Perth. The program managers were available throughout the Cup to:

- facilitate 'kick-off' workshops
- assist with promotional activities (e.g., foyer activations)
- respond to participant questions and participate in building management meetings if requested
- maintain the digital platform
- generate monthly reports for building managers and tenants
- encourage and support all participants as needs were identified.

A suite of **marketing and promotional material** was developed for participants to use. To maintain focus and momentum, campaigns were arranged around four, three month 'seasons' that were implemented over the 12-month duration of the Cup (Figure 3).

Figure 3: The 'four seasons' of the Cup



3. Recruiting cup participants

Recruitment to the Cup started with BBP businesses nominating buildings from their portfolios. Discussions were then held between Cup program managers, building managers and tenants within each building to establish whether a building would participate. Some tenants commenced their participation after a building had started in the Cup. Individuals were recruited throughout the Cup period.

3.1 Recruiting buildings to the Cup

Reasons for building owners to get involved

There were a variety of reasons for building owners to get involved in the Cup.

The main motivation for building owners was to improve the overall sustainability performance of their buildings by getting tenants involved. Traditionally, the main focus of building owners has been on sustainability in the base building since they have operational control over base building plant and its operations. However, over the past few years, respondents reported that there has been growing recognition that building owners should work more closely with tenants to improve whole building sustainability. This is reflected in the quotes of three corporate sustainability managers:

They (tenants) are effectively the other half of the equation. You know, if base building is 50% of the energy usage then the other 50% is from the tenants. So, they are always in there as part of the whole sustainability story. Corporate Sustainability Manager

At the end of the day, I think we can improve base building amenities and services only so much. We've got these huge buildings that use so much electricity, waste and all the rest. So, it would be kind of pointless to continue on a sustainability journey but only focus on those base building aspects. The tenants are so critical in making big impacts. So, working with and influencing our tenants is definitely a thing we can do more of. Corporate Sustainability Manager

It becomes pretty obvious that if you look at the whole of building approach to sustainability that we really need to be able to unlock opportunities for tenants to participate and/or to unlock opportunities to educate, create greater awareness about tenant performance and tenant operations to drive more holistic and whole of building outcomes. And that is why I was

an advocate [for the Cup]. Beyond green lease clauses and creating a rating system for leases and sustainable building management committees it is important to actually have a program, a gamification to unlock opportunities in that whole building space. Corporate Sustainability Manager

Strong engagement was also viewed as the key to 'next generation' sustainability.

In the sector there is still a very strong focus on what we have operational control over and for that the base building is the main focus. My view is that strong strategic engagement and dialogue with tenants is important to help us identify risks and opportunities and specifically reduce those challenges and barriers to adopt and drive next generation of Sustainability at the whole building level. Corporate Sustainability Manager

For building owners with established 'whole building' sustainability targets it was easier to justify providing resources to engage with tenants on sustainability. The following responses from two corporate sustainability managers reflect the focus on targets - particularly in relation to greenhouse gas emissions.

Our science-based [emissions reduction] target is an acknowledgement that our sphere of influence extends beyond merely what we can control directly. We need to reduce scope three emissions, even though it's harder and even though it can be more intangible in terms of the quantification process. We acknowledge that there is more energy use in our buildings and that's more emissions emitted than we have control over and as a result we need to make commitments to reduce those. We have targets we need to meet. There's no way for us to achieve those targets without engaging with our tenants. Corporate Sustainability Manager

We've moved to a whole of building scope and our customer engagement around these initiatives will definitely need to drive performance and behaviour change for us to be able to achieve our 2025 targets. So, we saw the Cup as an opportunity to help us with that. The Cup has the infrastructure in the dashboard that we like and it certainly can create a little bit of competition between participating organisations. Corporate Sustainability Manager

Involvement in the Cup was also seen as an important way to show leadership – particularly as this was a 'first' and a 'pilot' program.

We see ourselves as a sustainability leader. The City has a positive reputation. So being involved in a new initiative like the Cup provides a real

opportunity for us to demonstrate our leadership by being part of an innovative pilot program. Corporate Sustainability Manager

Ultimately, tenant engagement initiatives were generally viewed as one part of a broader business strategy to help to attract and retain tenants.

Tenant engagement initiatives help to keep our tenants 'sticky'. Although the main tenant decision makers are at a higher level, if you've got happy employees that are working in your business then that certainly adds to a decision on whether or not a tenant is going to renew their lease. And also, you know, even from a leasing perspective, when tenants are looking to relocate to another building, health and wellness and sustainability is a massive part of that decision. Tenant Engagement Manager

One corporate sustainability manager highlighted that tenant engagement on sustainability can also be viewed as a mechanism to help manage risk.

Strong strategic engagement and dialogue with tenants is important to help us identify risks and opportunities and specifically reduce those challenges and barriers to adopt and drive next generation of Sustainability at the whole building level. Corporate Sustainability Manager

Summary

Reasons for building owners to be involved in the Cup and to improve tenant engagement around sustainability include:

- Recognition that tenants have a significant footprint that owners should work to influence
- Some owners have 'whole building sustainability targets' and since they have limited control over tenant operations, they see effective engagement and collaboration as essential.
- More broadly, tenant engagement initiatives are seen as contributing to the business goal of attracting and retaining tenants.
- Involvement in the Cup was also viewed as an opportunity to demonstrate leadership and manage risk.

3.2 Reasons building owners chose not to participate in the Cup

Two buildings that initially signed up for the Cup were unable to continue. In one case the reason for withdrawing was that their IT systems were incompatible with the Cup's digital platform. The Property Manager in the building found that without the functionality provided by the digital platform it was much more difficult to sign up individuals and to co-ordinate the building's involvement in the Cup.

In another case, the timing of the Cup did not align with the existing tenant engagement initiatives around sustainability that were currently underway. It was considered that involvement in the Cup may dilute the impact of these existing initiatives and potentially create some confusion with tenants. However, the building owner highlighted that they were keen to participate in the Cup in future.

There were a number of buildings that chose not to participate in the first place. One owner had hoped to include a second building in the Cup. However, they chose not to include the building in the pilot because they felt that the level of external support provided by the Cup Program Managers to buildings in Sydney and Perth would not be available in Melbourne where the building was located.

One program manager explained that some buildings they had approached chose not to participate because the property managers felt that there wouldn't be sufficient interest from the tenants themselves.

Some property managers participating in the Cup explained that they initially had concerns about not being able to fund or resource initiatives that may be identified by tenants in the Cup. Closely related to this concern was the potential difficulty of assigning time to maintain momentum for the Cup once it got going. As one property manager put it:

The concern is that once you start the conversation you have to keep it going. Property Manager

There was also a perceived risk associated with underperformance.

The pressure can be a good thing, but there's certainly a risk associated with being seen as a lower performer relative to others. Corporate Sustainability Manager

The Cup worked best in buildings where funds were available to support initiatives such as lobby activations and improvement projects. The quote below provides an example of the type of funding that may be required and the proactive attitude of the building owner.

One of the things we are trying to roll out now is to encourage people to recycle better. If it means that we have to provide funds upfront to buy bins, then we are OK with that. Corporate Sustainability Manager

Summary:

Reasons some buildings did not participate in the Cup include:

- Limited access to the digital platform due to IT issues
- Existing focus on particular tenant engagement issues meant that timing wasn't right as there was a risk of diluting the existing initiatives

Other concerns expressed by Cup participants that may have contributed to buildings deciding not to participate in the Cup:

- Limited access to the resources needed to 'do it well'.
- Tenant engagement for sustainability was not viewed as a priority
- Reputational risk associated with not performing well in the cup
- Concern that resources would not be available to deliver the cup including activities like foyer activations and implementing environmental projects.

3.3 Recruiting 'companies' to the Cup

One of the major challenges associated with recruiting tenants to the Cup, was the varied level of tenant interest.

We want to drive that competition. Encourage some transparency around data and things like that and also get results like so they can see that another business is using x amount of electricity - to create that competition. But it's also very difficult because some businesses do really want to keep that information to themselves. I think as much as you do certain activations and things, and we want to create more of that, but it is difficult because it's hard to get everyone involved. Tenant Engagement Manager

Additionally, some building managers did not have established contacts with tenants or systems in place to communicate with them. One property manager highlights this:

The challenge was that we didn't have the platform to contact all of the people in the precinct. We have the tenant representative details but they don't necessarily focus on sustainability. The challenge was to work out how to get in contact with people who are motivated to progress sustainability. Property Manager

In cases where there were already high levels of tenant engagement, it was easier for building owners to recruit tenants to be involved in the Cup. One building manager explained:

For us it was easy because the tenants were already interested. When we first found out about the Cup, we spoke to each of the tenants – either at their scheduled meeting or if we didn't have a tenant meeting, I picked up the phone and went through the plan. I said the first thing we're going to do is do a meet and greet and then we will have a workshop. But really the main tenants were onboard from the start. Building Manager

Some tenants had sustainability goals and/or targets. To meet these, they required assistance from building managers. These organisations were keen to engage with property managers in order to gain access to data on performance in some areas (such as waste) and to get assistance to improve their sustainability performance. Two Corporate Sustainability Manager's shared their perspectives:

Our tenants are not there to serve the building owner. The tenants are there to do their business and we're there to support them in that so you know, it works best where we have mutually aligned goals. Corporate Sustainability Manager

For tenants focused on sustainability we would generally be a scope three [emission] for them, so we share information. It's really easy to engage because we can help each other achieve our own goals. Typically, these tenants are all of the same mindset and not super cost focused. Corporate Sustainability Manager

Given the range of tenant needs and interest, one corporate sustainability manager suggested that a good strategy is to build a tenant engagement approach by initially working with the tenants that are most aligned on sustainability.

What tenants are focused on is the question of 'how can we create mutually beneficial opportunities?'. We need to consider what buildings can we push leadership through because our tenant wants to lead in their sector. And we can use the building as the platform for them to achieve their sustainability outcomes as well. So, I think that the customer side focus is definitely increasing, and we are definitely going to be putting more effort into that. But certainly, we need to remember we are there to serve customers and it's not the other way around. So, asking them to participate when they're not already on a sustainability pathway probably is

challenging, but it's a challenge that we will eventually face. But we're not going to start with the laggards. Corporate Sustainability Manager

Summary

- Challenging to get all tenants involved
- Some property managers didn't have established contacts with sustainability champions within tenancies at the start of the Cup
- Previous engagement and collaboration between Property Managers and tenants assisted
- Alignment of sustainability goals helped
- A strategy is to start with the more interested tenants (with aligned sustainability goals) and build on those relationships before involving others.

3.4 Recruiting 'individuals' to the Cup

The challenge of getting individuals involved in the Cup and Sustainability in was highlighted by one Tenant Engagement Manager as follows:

It's hard to get everyone involved. You know you can generally get one or two representatives from each business wanting to do something. But it's really hard to get whole of the business. Tenant Engagement Manager

Another tenant engagement manager highlighted that 'limited time' and 'multiple priorities' are significant factors

I think one of the biggest issues is just the sheer volume of asks from staff ... they're constantly being asked to participate in this or that, or provide extra input into a business process, or have yet one other thing to follow up and act on. I think the reality is it's quite a simple process - the actual Cup, but one of the biggest barriers is getting people to actually sit down and spend 5 minutes sorting going through something new when they're busy. Tenant Engagement Manager

While tenant representatives played a central role in recruiting individuals directly, initiatives such as foyer activations were seen to be effective.

Because the more people you had sign up the more points you get, we'd run foyer events to draw people out. To be involved they had to sign up. That worked well. Property Manager

The digital platform itself also assisted with the process.

Just sending people links really didn't work. It was actually simply sitting in the room and getting people to bring their laptops. Then sitting down and saying, 'here you go'. 'We are already having a meeting so open your laptop, go on, click on the action, see how this works and that works.'
Tenant Engagement Manager

The competitive aspect which made it 'fun' also helped.

It was about getting to everyone and saying 'OK. We're going to compete in this competition. I want you on board with me. Here's how it's going to be fun'. Because everyone has got their day jobs they've got their regular stuff they have to do. They don't want to have to fill in a form. So, if you can make something a little bit fun you can definitely get more people involved even though sustainability is not everyone's cup of tea. Tenant Representative

Obtaining points for referrals was helpful and encouraged people to sign up others through their networks.

I was in the graduate program then. We would catch up for lunches with other grads on a regular basis. I just mentioned it to those guys, and they jumped on. There was also a referral button on the app and you get recognised for the referral. I got a prize for that! Individual Participant

While the proportion of individuals from a business that signed up varied widely, there was a sense that the Cup assisted in building awareness and encouraging action at the individual level.

I think the success of the Cup from a tenant perspective - getting individuals to sign up to rack up some points and all that kind of stuff, is very dependent on the mindset within the business to actually want to participate in that sort of thing. I know that I found it hard to encourage some people to sign up into get points because they're not interested in sustainability. They're not going to do it, yeah, but I think I definitely think there's more interest now than there was prior so if we if we re launch the Cup now for example, I feel like there would be higher take-up than there was before." Tenant Representative

Ultimately, personal interest was a powerful motivator that influenced the level of effort that individual put into the Cup and into sustainability initiatives in general.

Personally, it just fascinated me. And any initiative that we can come up with that can help the planet is fantastic. I learnt a lot. Property Manager

It is fun. It's just the passion. We are really passionate about the environment and the cup just helped fuel that. It wasn't a means of a check box or you know, getting an award – that would be a bonus. It was just a fun way of trying to push that sustainability mentality through the building and do better for the environment overall. Tenant Representative

The actions and influence of peers was also very influential.

A work colleague was handing out flyers downstairs that explained about downloading the app. I was working with her on another project and she kept talking about it so I signed up. I started doing exercise during the workday and using the shower facilities. A big part of it was also the information on recycling that made me take a more conscious effort to put things in the right bin. Individual Participant

Summary

- It is difficult to get all individuals from a tenancy involved
- Limited time and attention due to the many 'asks' for staff is a challenge when approaching them to do something new
- What helped:
 - Foyer activations were useful to obtain individual sign-ups
 - Competitive aspect which made it fun
 - Peers and work colleagues looking to sign up others
 - The digital platform made it tangible
- Appeared that the competitive aspect was particularly useful to engage individuals that did not have a strong personal interest in sustainability due to the competitive aspect
- Provided an avenue for those that were already interested ('champions') in sustainability to get involved

3.5 Cup participants

5 commercial buildings and 2 commercial building precincts were involved in the Cup. Within the total of 14 buildings that were involved, 81 tenant organisations⁵ and 516 individuals participated (Table 2).

Table 2: Summary of Cup participants

Building	Building owner/ manager	Building level	Company level	Individuals / occupancy level
Tower 1 Barangaroo Sydney	Lend lease	25	22	84
Towers 2 &3 Barangaroo Sydney	Lend lease	11	25	82
100 Harris St Pyrmont	Dexus	12	20	193
Brookfield Place Tower 2 Perth	Brookfield	7	9	38
Rhodes Corporate Park Rhodes 33 Alfred St Sydney (7 building precinct)	Frasers	17	14	101
100 St Georges Terrace Perth	ISPT	5	5	8
No.1 Martin Place Sydney	Charter Hall	4	3	10

⁵ Within the Cup the label Company refers to tenants.

4. Impact and benefits of the Cup

Engagement enhanced collaboration and created a sense of community

One indicator of improved collaboration that was mentioned by many respondents was higher frequency in the conversations between property managers and tenants about sustainability.

The engagement piece is essential because ultimately tenants have to decide to be involved. For us, engagement is about having people ask questions. It is about 'having a conversation' Corporate Sustainability Manager

The value of those conversations was highlighted by another Corporate Sustainability Manager as:

The Cup stimulated a conversation between that individual and their employer and the feedback we have had from our property management teams is that the property management reps [for the building overall] and the property reps for the tenants, engaged in a conversation about what it [sustainability and the Cup] was and how we were tracking. I think that was the key piece.

One Sustainability Manager observed a change in the level of collaboration across their building through their involvement in the Cup.

There is more familiarity and more comfort about sustainability between both the property manager and tenants and they share ideas with each other and talk about it a lot more. And now we get tenants proposing new ideas and asking for stuff. It is a more open conversation about what we all can do. Corporate Sustainability Manager

Beyond conversations, the Cup also helped to create a culture of teamwork and a sense of community. From the perspective of a tenant representative and property manager working together in one of the participant buildings:

It was a great way to get involved with other tenants in the building and having that sort of team mentality and working together on achieving some things. Then it was obviously fun when we actually did stuff - so when we got the water tank or you know, when we put on some markets. They were great achievements, and it was fun. Tenant Representative

The most important thing to me was teamwork. So, I was working with people in the building as a team. It wasn't anything to do with hierarchy.
Property Manager

For one property manager in a precinct within which there had been limited tenant engagement in the past, public events played a particular important role in helping to 'get the conversations started'.

What I liked was that our foyer activations raised a lot of awareness throughout the park and it gave us an opportunity to run events that brought people together and created a sense of community. And the approach was brand new – we hadn't run events like this before. Corporate Sustainability Manager Perspective

Another advantage of the whole building approach was that it widened the number of stakeholders that could get involved.

The Cup provides an avenue for smaller retail tenants to be involved. That is one advantage of the whole building focus as it draws in food courts and other small businesses in the building. Program Manager

The competitive aspect likely involved some people that would not traditionally be involved or interested in sustainability

I reckon there were people who got involved not because of the sustainability aspect, but more because of the competition. It gave them a reason to get involved. Tenant Representative

Searching for opportunities

The collaborative approach combined with the list of activities, helped encourage participants to look for a range of opportunities in their buildings.

We were looking at all sorts of stuff. I think that was a good thing about the Cup, too, is that it to naturally just made us start thinking – 'Oh, we could do this, and we can do that'. Then you walk around the building and you start to look at it differently and you see opportunities. Tenant Representative

From a tenant perspective, part of the motivation behind looking for more initiatives was the understanding that those projects could actually be progressed because there was an open dialogue with the property manager.

If you've got a building manager that is actually happy to get involved in that sort of stuff then if you have actually got ideas, then you can help make them come to life. Tenant representative

Improving environmental performance

The most frequently implemented activities at each level are shown in Tables 3,4 and 5.

Table 3: Most frequently implemented building manager activities

Activity	Number
Assess your waste	7
Be water wise	7
A Waste Stream: Away with e-waste	7
A Waste Stream: Recycle paper and cardboard	7
A Waste Stream: Secure paper	7
Activate Reporting to tenants	7
Attach clear bin signage for tenants	7
Support Earth Hour	7

Table 4: Most frequently implemented company representative activities

Activity	Number
Away with e-waste	21
Ban the under-desk bin	19
Recycle paper and cardboard	18
Assess and track your waste	18
Lighting timers and sensors	16

Table 5: Most frequently implemented individual actions

Activity	Number
Check your print settings and habits	169
Avoid single use items	168
Clean out your filing cupboard	142
Donate your unwanted work clothes	117

Improved waste management – particularly sorting of waste into appropriate bins, was frequently mentioned as an example of an improved environmental outcome that was achieved through the Cup. From a tenant perspective, the need for collaboration on waste management was presented as:

You are limited in what you can do in terms of your waste as a tenant because the waste is managed by building management. So, I had wanted to measure our waste to get more accurate numbers each month. As a tenant I rely on the building manager to provide that data and the bins to improve our recycling.

In that particular building quantification of waste has improved significantly since the start of the Cup which, in turn, helped to establish improvement in recycling rates.

An individual participant in a building that has the infrastructure to sort a large number of waste streams found that communication about which bin to use was an important improved throughout the Cup.

Through my involvement in the Cup, I learnt a lot about which bin to use. I don't know where else I would have gone to get that information. It was something introduced early on. And it was interesting to see if you have a green bin you do better. I didn't know about that before. Individual Participant

A tenant representative utilised existing graphic design expertise within their business to improve signage for waste bins. The same business is currently conducting focus groups to better understand how to improve waste separation in their offices.

One example of a whole building collaboration initiative was the planning and running of 'Eco markets'. The project is described here by a Tenant Representative.

We put on some markets before Christmas, and it was designed to be ecofriendly stuff. We, as a building, all came together to come up with that idea and make it happen. It was run in the common areas out the front – which is something that would not have happened if building management wasn't on board with that sort of thing. If the rest of the tenants weren't interested in doing it and if we didn't talk to each other and actually get together and discuss these things, then it would never have happened. And doing it created a lot of conversation, which is brilliant. And it was the first time that something like that happened in this building. Tenant Representative

While respondents explained that some projects ‘would have happened anyway’, there was often a greater degree of ownership, interest and excitement across the building as a whole when they did happen. This further reinforced the value of sustainability initiatives within the building community.

We installed the solar panels- which is something that we would have done it anyway. But the difference was that we had everyone behind it, supporting it. Property Manager

In relation to energy, the level of influence and opportunity depended upon the leasing arrangement as to whether tenants sourced and paid for their own electricity or if it was provided through the property owner. One Property Manager explained:

We are more easily able to influence energy where we have embedded networks. By moving towards a 100% renewable electricity contract, tenants can benefit off of our agreement. So, they get to make the claim saying they're 100% carbon neutral as well. They don't have to worry about anything. Property Manager

Promoting health and well-being

The Cup also helped to promote health and wellbeing. For example, through increased use of end of trip facilities.

I started to exercise at lunchtime - going for runs and using the shower facilities – I started doing that. Not something I would normally do. Prompted me to use facilities that I hadn't previously made the most of. Individual participant

Helping property and tenant managers to get their jobs done

Managing a building and managing a tenancy requires collaboration on a range of issues. The following explanation provided by a tenant representative highlights how improved collaboration brought about by the Cup can transfer to improved collaboration across other day-to-day building and tenant management issues.

If you think about end of trip facilities or things like that – the Property Manager may have a problem with people riding their bikes inside. To deal with it they could send an email to all the tenants – to me and my equivalents, and say ‘you know, no one is allowed to ride their bikes inside. Please pass this message on.’ I can just forward that email on and be done with it. But it won't solve the problem because people will probably continue to ride their bikes anyway!

Because I have been working more closely with the Property Manager on the Cup, I understand where he's coming from and what to do to make sure I am on his good side – so that he is also on my good side! So, [to deal with the bike issue] I would do more than just flick that email on. I would actually remind people in a week's time or If I caught people out, I would actually reiterate the message that's coming from building management rather than just going - 'It's just building management ... here's the email.'

There needs to actually be that teamwork aspect and understanding and respect so that the tenant actually has an interest in helping. And it's the building as a whole. We actually have to recognize that we actually are just part of a whole ... We're not just one tenant in the building and we can do whatever we want. Tenant Representative

Establishing a foundation for future initiatives

The benefits achieved throughout the Cup had also led to the implementation of new initiatives as people in the building built confidence through their shared achievements. One property manager explains:

I believe that because the Cup had forced us to work together, people came to trust us. People knew that we could put on an event in the foyer because they had been to our first event a few months before. So, people knew that if we said we were going to do something they knew that we would actually come up with something pretty good.

Ultimately, in that building, experience in the Cup has led to the implementation of a suite of whole building activities including a major fund-raising event focused around the 2020/21 summer bushfires.

By involving individuals as well as tenant representatives, the Cup can also help improve the likelihood that a sustainability program will continue if a key person leaves.

It's great that the Cup engages multiple people. It means that if someone leaves there is another person to contact and sustainability efforts don't come to a sudden stop. Program Manager

One sustainability manager has been exploring ways to build on sustainability initiatives as more people return to the building following the Covid-19 constraints.

We could try to give them a welcome back or welcome 2021 back and saying hey guys, this is what we did all of last year. This is what we plan to do for next year and this is what we think we can work together with. Property Manager

Ultimately, improved collaboration through sustainability was considered to be a contributing factor in creating an improved work environment which would help to attract and retain tenants.

I think the benefit of the sense of community is ultimately it's the marketability and the bottom line, so people that enjoy coming to work that are happy they do better work and it'll feedback to retention - they will stay here, and they will want to be here. Property Manager

Summary

The Cup outcomes and benefits included:

- Engagement led to improved collaboration and sense of community
- Improved environmental outcomes
- Supported health and wellbeing
- Personal learning and satisfaction
- Helping Property and Tenant Managers do their jobs
- Build confidence for ongoing initiatives
- Foundation for future initiatives
- Attract and retain tenants

5. Perspectives on key design features of the Cup

This section explores the effectiveness of key design features of the cup and captures suggestions participants made for improvement.

5.1 Competition

Overall, the competitive ‘game-based’ approach was seen to be fun and engaging as the following quotes illustrate.

As soon as you gamify you make a competition. Everyone gets involved. We've had numerous times where we've tried to pitch teams against each other for like fund-raising things and stuff like that, And really it's like 'oh no, we don't want finance to beat us' or 'we need to beat marketing' or things like that. And then people actually get more involved. Tenant Representative

I'm already on board but it gives me a way to get others involved. Gamification works in other areas of our business as well so is a really useful mechanism. It assists champions to engage others. Tenant Representative

When the building opened it was pretty clear that competition actually works quite well. So, work that I was doing around trying to improve waste separation and actually getting tenants to understand how well or not well they were achieving against targets compared to their compatriots in their building was the hook that seemed to make a big difference. That competitive part of the Cup works very well in that kind of corporate environment. Tenant Engagement Manager

It was about going 'OK. We're gonna compete in this competition. I want you on board with me. Here's how it's going to be fun.' Because everyone's got their day jobs. They've got their regular stuff they have to do. They don't want to have to fill in a form. So if you can make something a little bit fun it works a lot better. Tenant Representative

The competitive aspect created a shared sense of effort and achievement rather than focusing on the building owner or tenant or an individual's interest.

*“The Cup was a way of broadcasting it [sustainability] to the wider community. It was also (from the corporate point of view) very important because it wasn’t about from a general about our business [the building owner] doing really well, it was about participating in a competition.
Property Manager*

The competitive aspect also encouraged peers to share effective practices.

I think that the gamification affect extends to the building owners. You know we’re in a Better Building Partnership waste committee meeting or we are in an environmental committee meeting and it’s all about what base buildings are doing and then you know there are these side conversations after those meetings. ‘Hey, I saw that your building is doing fantastically well – how are you doing that’. And so it’s all about spurring that conversation which is really important on both sides - for tenants and building owners. Sustainability Manager

Competition didn’t work for everyone however.

It seemed to me it would be great to, you know, have a bit of competitiveness in in the in the mix and to do better than the others. But let’s face it, we’re dealing with some people who couldn’t give a damn. They get to the kitchen, look at the waste bins and go - ‘Oh, this is too hard!’ Tenant Engagement Manager

Summary:

The competitive aspect of the Cup was seen to be an effective component of the design. It:

- was fun and engaging
- helped to get people involved that were not necessarily interested in sustainability in its own right
- created a sense of effort and achievement rather than focusing on the building owner or tenant or an individual’s interest.
- encouraged peers at all levels to share effective practices

While the competitive aspect was not appealing to all, overall, it was seen as a useful complement to other initiatives and efforts to get people involved in sustainability.

5.2 The digital platform and points system

Aspects that worked well

The digital platform and point system provided the underpinning infrastructure for the Cup. As highlighted earlier in this report, it assisted with recruiting organisations and individuals to the Cup because it provided a very tangible and simple way to participate. Other benefits and limitations of the digital platform and points system are listed below in conjunction with relevant quotes from respondents.

⇒ People could compare their performance to others

The points system made me extremely competitive! Particularly with our business competitors in other buildings. I didn't want them to beat us - no way! Tenant Representative

⇒ It made it easy to identify and take action

What I would say would have been the most useful for the people that actually were able to click the link and get into answering the questions. It was quite personalized and easy to use so people could relate to the things they were doing. It was particularly great for people who were working 'outside the field' – that didn't have much background on sustainability initiatives. Sustainability Manager

⇒ It provided a 'tangible' way to demonstrate what the cup was about and to 'sign people up'

In talking to people in other buildings where the sign up was good, I heard that you had facilities managers or partnership managers who were very hands-on. Once they got people signed up and they were engaged they were kind of away. It was a pretty straightforward process. Tenant Engagement Manager

⇒ Provided clear actions that make sustainability tangible

I liked the clear, simple and action-oriented information. It made concepts like net zero tangible. Program Manager

⇒ It provided flexibility for the way in which participants at all levels progressed through the Cup

There are many corporates that come with their own specific goals, needs and interests such as trying to achieve Sustainable Development Goals or to report on their greenhouse gas emissions. The approach was flexible enough to align with those particular goals or priorities due to the range of

actions that are offered. This flexibility allowed companies and individuals to choose the actions most relevant to them. Program Manager

The Leaderboard and overall design let people 'choose their own adventure'. Corporate Sustainability Manager

- ⇒ It provided program managers with a visible way to determine the particular needs of each building and of the participants overall

It is great that there is continuous and transparent reporting. It means that actions and needs are clear and transparent. Program managers can respond to those needs and share data and develop support as needed. It means we can be responsive rather than reactive. We can see where the needs are and respond. Program Manager

- ⇒ Provided positive feedback and recognition of effort

Just knowing the good you're doing. Getting that feedback and being told that you're making a contribution is really important for people. Property Manager

- ⇒ Participants could 'pledge' their intended actions and then follow through

I liked having the different ways earn points. Anytime you gamify something then it's always going to do better than not. It's because people love a competition. It was also really useful to have the list of things that you can do. Because you think 'I'm going to add that to my list' and 'I'm going to think about it and then consider that because I reckon that is something we can achieve in the next 12 months'. So, you add that and think 'I am going to do it'. And it kind of forces you to 'actually' do it. Whereas before you might think 'I'd like to do that' but then I would put it on the list and then forget about it. But because there's kind of this competition mentality as well, you get really determined. Property Manager

Limitations and suggested improvements

Overall, participants considered the Cup to be effective. Having participated in the Cup and experienced it directly. Participants had a number of valuable suggestions for ways in which future iterations of the digital platform and points system could be enhanced.

⇒ Potential to 'game' the system

Overall, the system was seen to be credible. However, one individual felt that it could be easy to 'game' the system:

I reckon that a lot of people [individuals] with high scores might have gamed the system. I just didn't think you would be able to achieve those score levels. In some cases you can only do one thing or another – you can't do both. And t a lot of that was a lot of the stuff that you earn points for you didn't have to prove that you did it.

⇒ The point system didn't always provide recognition for relevant actions

We did some initiatives that didn't line up directly with the point system – so it was difficult to get the points for these. Tenant Representative

⇒ The point system didn't account for the differences between buildings. These made comparison difficult in some cases.

"I think originally we were quite we were quite competitive because we were so determined to be the top ... we were ignoring the larger buildings. No offense to them, but they were going to win anyway. There were no other buildings stood a chance. So I think we're coming third so I counted that as coming first. Property Manager

⇒ The point system could be based on the establishment of a stronger baseline of performance at the start to attribute improvement throughout the Cup period.

I think it would be better to have more participants and to make it less about first, second and third. It could be more about categorized achievement and outcomes around setting a baseline and enhancing performance. Corporate Sustainability Manager

⇒ Create more point options for individuals

Some participants felt that the focus on individual action may not be required for the Cup to be effective.

I think for me there's probably a need to focus in on whole of building tenant performance rather than and then have a secondary focus on individual outcomes. Now I know you won't get tenants changing behavior and choice unless their people are driving the conversation, so that's why all three of those key stakeholder universes were put together in the original format. But I think you need to focus it on the areas required to get hold of tenant performance within the context of the building. Corporate Sustainability Manager

However, others felt that it was necessary and there should be *more* point options for individuals – as indicated by a tenant representative:

My only bit of feedback is that for me I don't think there are enough individual point options – that is, for the actions being taken by individuals. I felt it was limited in the number of things you could earn points for. A lot of them seemed to be more big-ticket items which you can't necessarily do without a whole heap of approvals. Tenant Representative

Summary:

Benefits

- ⇒ People could compare their performance to others
- ⇒ It made it easy to identify and take action
- ⇒ It provided a 'tangible' way to demonstrate what the cup was about and to 'sign people up'
- ⇒ Provides clear actions that make sustainability tangible
- ⇒ It provides flexibility for the way in which participants at all levels progressed through the Cup
- ⇒ It provides program managers with a visible way to determine the particular needs of each building and of the participants overall
- ⇒ Provides positive feedback and recognition of effort
- ⇒ Encourages people to 'pledge' action and then follow through when they can

Considerations

- ⇒ Potential to 'game' the system
- ⇒ The point system didn't always provide recognition for relevant actions
- ⇒ Comparison was on an 'uneven playing field' due to differences between buildings
- ⇒ Rewards could focus on different attributes rather than total points
- ⇒ More point options for individuals could be created

5.3 Support to implement the Cup

One of the concerns for all stakeholders considering their participation in the Cup regards the resources needed to participate effectively.

Program Managers (from the Cities of Sydney and Perth)

Participants that utilised the support provided by the Program Managers found that it was very useful.

For example, six buildings participated in half-day ‘kick-off’ workshops in February and March 2019. These workshops were seen as a useful and important mechanisms to help participants across a building to understand more about the Cup, how it works and to begin the process of identifying points that they could gain, plan for and potentially work together to achieve.

The ‘kick-off workshop report’ captured the following ‘lessons learned’:

1. The Cup itself as well as the kick-off workshops provide a focus for building owners and tenants to collaborate on sustainability. Involvement in the Cup provides participants with ‘permission’ and a network to collaborate.
2. Ongoing support from the City to each of the participants can further help to ensure that they set up effective communication structures and continue to progress relevant initiatives. Participants suggested that this was a valuable aspect of their involvement in the Cup.
3. Given the high level of interest and effort being put into the Cup by participants, it will be important for the City to carefully consider how performance is assessed and awards are provided. Positive feedback to all participants is likely to assist them in maintaining an ongoing focus on building level collaboration and improvement. (Source: BBC kick-off workshops report 9May2019)

These recommendations were taken on board by the Program Managers and they played an important role in supporting participants throughout the Cup. This role included a focus on answering questions as they came up as reflected in the following quote from a Tenant Representative:

We were constantly talking to each other and also to our [program manager]. We would ask: ‘can we get points for this? Are we going to do it anyway?’ If [the program manager] said we won't get any points – we are still going to do it - but it's a little bit sweeter if you do something and you and you get points. Tenant Representative

The role was seen to be particularly useful due to the relative independence and specific expertise of the Program Managers. Building management meetings provided a particularly useful forum for Program Managers to be involved in.

I think it's really important that a representative of the Cup actually attends our regular tenant meetings because it helps people like [the Tenant Representative] and I to have a ... a chair if you like. The Program Manager helps provide that guidance because at one level we don't know what we're doing! We don't know what's possible! We don't know the best way to do something! So, if you have a Program Manager in the meetings it is really worthwhile. They were providing suggestions by saying things like 'other officers or other buildings are doing something like this, and you might like to do the same'. Or 'have you thought of doing that'. it wasn't a case of the Program Manager looking around the building, saying, 'You need to do this. You need to do that. You'll get more points if you do this.' It was a style of assistance which was more about guidance rather than direction - and we made your own decisions. Tenant Representative

Program Managers acted as facilitators and mentors. This approach was important as enabled participants to have ownership of their decisions.

Wherever we got to in the cup was We did it all on our own if you like with [the Program Manager's] advice and help and suggestions. It is obvious that [the Program Manager] can't do it - they can only suggest.

The benefits were having that external party involved - someone who's 'in the know' and is aware of (not just from a Cup perspective but from the City of Sydney perspective) what's happening across businesses and across the city. They also told us about things that are up and coming - products and services or things that we might have no idea about.

The meetings that they [the Program Manager] attended they seem to be more productive. We did meetings quite regularly to start with and then it sort of dropped off a bit, but I think it is really important to have the 'official collaboration.

[The Program Manager] and I had a workshop with 5 tenants early in the Cup. The Workshop went well – it gave the teams an idea of what we were trying to achieve. And what that they could do to help. It opened their eyes on some simple but important actions as well like waste management, turning off lights, supplementary air conditioning, ensuring taps are turned off and other water saving measures. Corporate Sustainability Manager

In-building resources

Buildings had access to varying degrees of in-house resources. At one end of the spectrum some buildings had access to a Tenant Engagement Manager:

I work a lot with our Tenant Engagement Manager. They are absolutely brilliant. We draw on each other's expertise quite regularly. And I chat to them all the time about what we're doing. Tenant Representative

One area that was challenging for some Property Managers to resource were activities like foyer activations.

We wanted to 'up' the activations and engagement. But we came to realise the workload that's involved. And it's something that we can't take on as well as doing our own roles. So, now that we have been through the Cup we want to sort of trial a new position where someone's sole purpose would be to manage those events to give it the attention that it deserves and we want it to have. Property Manager

While it is difficult to quantify the amount of assistance and support that each participant required to deliver the Cup, it is clear that additional resources are required to deliver the Cup compared to business-as-usual. The level of access to resources was clearly a factor in the outcomes that were achieved in each building.

Opportunities for networking and learning between buildings

More regular networking events within the building and across buildings were suggested as an additional resource that would help participants to implement the Cup. For example, one property manager suggested that it would be useful to do 'kick-off' style workshops more regularly. A Tenant Representative suggested that it would be valuable to arrange networking opportunities for participants to share lessons learned with each other.

It would be worthwhile having quarterly check-ins to see what other buildings are doing to boost that competition component and to boost morale. That would help with networking and collaborating across the buildings. Tenant Representative

Summary

Program managers provided important and valued support to participants. They were:

- available to answer participant questions throughout the Cup

- open to providing additional assistance where required
- arranged 'kick-off' workshops that were a valuable way to bring building stakeholders together to learn about the cup and to begin to plan the actions they would take
- provided an 'independent expert' perspective when participating in building management meetings

In some cases, Tenant Engagement Managers and internal Sustainability Managers provided valuable assistance to Property Managers and Tenant Representatives.

Activities such as 'foyer activations' are typically outside the remit of Property Managers on their own and were progressed with the help of a Cup Program Manager, Tenant Engagement Manager or Tenant Representative.

One participant is planning to trial a new role as Tenant Engagement Manager in their precinct in order to 'give it the attention that it deserves, and we want it to have.'

Two areas of additional assistance that were suggested are:

- quarterly whole building workshops in the style of the 'kick-off workshops'
- opportunities for active property managers and tenant representatives to share their experiences with each other (i.e., with other participants)

5.4 Campaigns - the four seasons

The resources provided for campaigns were found to be useful. In particular, many utilised resources that were available for 'special days' such as 'Ride to Work' Day.

We did a big focus on 'Ride to Work' day in October. I went around to a few of the buildings, and I was quite surprised how full some of the bike lock up areas were. That sort of activity was very well received. I even rode into work that day for the first time! Tenant Engagement Manager

A tenant representative explained that:

We capitalized on the fact that we were able to get some freebies from the Better Buildings Cup for our national recycling week in in 2019. That definitely was helpful! Tenant Representative

There were suggestions to increase flexibility in the campaign approach as the 'season theme' did not always align with current building priorities or with opportunities that stakeholders could influence.

If we're asking them [tenants] to participate in a waste initiative and we already prepared all this comms and stuff and yet they don't want to do it because it is not a focus at all to them it is a bit difficult. If it's not on their To Do List or it's on their radar, it's really not. Tenant Engagement Manager

A Corporate Sustainability Manager explained that there could be more flexibility in the approach to campaigns. For example, by developing a suite of resources that buildings could choose from as they need to so that it is appropriately focused.

It is important to have the right campaign. For example, if we run a campaign about renewable power it means that tenants come and ask – 'well, how do we do it here?' Well, actually we can't always do it so it becomes a tricky argument. Having a bigger library of initiatives and campaigns to choose from would be great. We have a marketing team that can organise placemaking, activations and events that we might run around sustainability - things like World Environment Day and National Water Week, those sorts of things. We like to hang our hat on one or two of those and really focus on them. It would be nice if the Cup could have a pool of things to choose from. You could have 20 things you can choose from or 20 activations. That way we could choose the things that are likely to work best in our building at the time. Corporate Sustainability Manager

This approach could extend to support materials for Building Management Meetings.

I think we could have a similar approach for Building Management Meetings where if there is nothing to talk about next month, I can go to the better Buildings Partnership Library and pull out some info. Corporate Sustainability Manager

Summary:

- Campaigns were seen as valuable and the material was appreciated
- Additional flexibility was suggested. Particularly in the form of a 'library of resources' for campaigns and foyer activations as well as building management meetings.

5.5 Timing

Overall, it was suggested that a 12-month period for the Cup was appropriate. There were a number of suggestions that the Cup could provide continuity over the longer term, however. This would reflect the notion of sustainability as a continuous 'journey' of improvement rather than a one-off initiative.

I think it should just be an ongoing engagement rather than a one off. You could have a Cup that goes for a year but then launch straight into another one or something else. Because a lot of the messaging around sustainability from our end is that this is a journey and it's a commitment over time. Corporate Sustainability Manager

There were also suggestions to provide greater flexibility around the starting time for the Cup. That would allow for buildings that were not quite ready to participate to have sufficient lead time to aim for commencement at a future time. It would also enable recruitment to build over a longer period.

More continuity could also help to maintain momentum.

The Cup started off very well. It's only just seems to have fizzled out towards the end of its program which I think sort of left some tenants who actually quite like that engagement in our site teams thinking, well, what do we do now what? Is there more stuff coming? Corporate Sustainability Manager Corporate Sustainability Manager

The response above reflects the difficulties brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic meant that the Cup did not conclude in the way that had been planned. The importance of continuity beyond the Cup 'pilot year' was mentioned by a number of respondents.

I think that one of the difficulties about putting energy into the relationships we have with our tenants around this is not knowing whether this is going to continue. They wonder if there is budget into the future or if there's only a 1-year budget. It is a barrier to putting a huge amount of effort in with your tenants. If you're not even sure that this is going to actually be funded in the next year. I think funding certainty is important. Tenant Engagement Manager

You build that trust up and you build the participation for a one off and then have it drop off. It makes it hard to reboot and restart. I think you've got to back a program like this and fund it for a period of years. Corporate Sustainability Manager

Summary:

- 12 months was considered to be the right period of time for running a Cup
- Additional flexibility around starting times would be useful.
- A longer-term Cup program, with a schedule of Cup starting times over several years would help to support longer term planning and create momentum

5.6 NABERS ratings as a performance measure

Participants in the Cup were encouraged to undertake NABERS Energy Co-assess ratings. Overall, however, there was limited uptake.

Two main barriers were articulated. First, where tenants had to pay for a rating, they sometimes found it difficult to justify the investment. Even though it is a relatively small investment, the payment has to be justified. Secondly, with regard to post Cup ratings, More recently, due to the COVID-19 pandemic disruptions, the usefulness of the rating has been questioned given the restrictions on office space use. A corporate sustainability manager provides a perspective on this.

They we're in the right ballpark when they created NABERS co-assess And [our team] have all been part of strategic thinking around how to make it approachable for tenants. While we have had reasonable uptake in our building, if you take that to another building - everyone's interested until they have got to go through the contractual terms of what the NABERS co assess process is - so it becomes a barrier to adopt that approach and then therefore across our portfolio. Sometimes we've had limited penetration or uptake. Corporate Sustainability Manager

In circumstances where the owner is willing to pay for the assessment, it is expected that there will be higher uptake of Co-assess. One Corporate Sustainability Manager explains:

It is a pitch to our tenants. We say: 'If you were going to do a NABERS rating of your tenancy, don't do that. You can save money on the certification fees if you come within the boundary of co-assess. We pay one fee which we would have paid anyway because we undertake a NABERS rating across the base building. So, come into co-assess, there will be no fee for you if you come in. Then we can start a conversation around performance. and if there's performance measures that we can implement within your tendency to improve the energy efficiency of the tenancy. It is more of a conversational starter around – 'oh you have got a 2-star rating or a 6 star rating ... what are some of the things you have done or what are some of the things you can do'. It can help us to have that conversation with them around performance outcomes.

Summary

- NABERS Co-Assess was intended to provide a foundation for determining changes that occurred over the period of the Cup
- Limited uptake made it of limited benefit for performance assessment
- However, NABERS Co-assess was promoted through Cup activities
- Where tenants were required to pay there was more resistance to undertaking an assessment
- Over the course of the Cup period some building owners chose to offer free Co-Assess assessments for their tenants
- The Cup could consider establishing baselines on energy, water, waste and social, health and wellbeing initiatives in future iterations of the Cup to enhance the measurement of impacts and improvement.

6. Future Actions and Opportunities

The Cup pilot demonstrates the important role that the BBP and the City can play to develop new and innovative sustainability programs. At the heart of the Cup is a unique design that encourages collaboration between stakeholders within commercial buildings. This evaluation has identified a number of future actions and opportunities that the BBP and the City can consider to further encourage whole building sustainability.

The intention here is to present a suite of options that have been suggested by respondents throughout the course of the evaluation. It is acknowledged that decisions as to which initiatives are to be pursued will depend upon access to resources and other factors.

6.1 Promote the value and practice of collaboration at the whole building level

The Cup demonstrated the benefits of adopting a whole building approach to sustainability combined with a structured approach to stakeholder engagement. Corporate sustainability managers, and other building stakeholders that were interviewed in this project, highlighted that 'whole building sustainability' was not uniformly considered an appropriate focus or priority by all building owners. One corporate sustainability manager explained that:

Some people say that because the building owner doesn't control those [tenant] emissions they have no requirement or obligation to reduce them. I think that the international regulatory guidance on that and the fact that

things fall outside their operational control is interpreted to mean that there ought not be an obligation to reduce them. It is a compelling argument - but there is controversy. And then there is still a distinction around what is included within scope 3 emissions. So as an example, whether to include embodied carbon. Corporate Sustainability Manager

Given that the buildings represented in the Cup are already industry leaders, it is reasonable to expect that there is a need to promote the reasons for and benefits of adopting a whole building approach to sustainability across the commercial building sector as a whole.

The motivation, approaches to tenant engagement and practical examples implemented by Cup participants all provide valuable insights into the reasons for, approaches to and benefits of whole building sustainability. The experience of participants could be drawn upon to develop a suite of multimedia resources that promote and support others in their efforts to adopt a whole building approach to sustainability.

Options that could be considered include:

- Video case studies
- Develop and make available an annotated version of this report
- Conduct webinar and/or face to face event to provide Cup participants with an opportunity to share their experience with others
- develop written material outlining the reasons and benefits and practical steps forward
- develop a practically oriented 'how to' or best practice guide for whole building sustainability

Examples of the topics that could be covered in such information material includes:

- The business drivers and benefits of adopting a whole building approach to sustainability including specific benefits for each stakeholder
- Why leading building owners are establishing whole building sustainability targets including net zero
- The role and good practices associated with whole building stakeholder engagement
- Common pitfalls and how they can be addressed
- Resources that are available to assist with implementation

Summary

- The Cup has demonstrated the value of whole building sustainability
- As an emerging area of practice there have been limited examples, case studies and blueprints for how to achieve it through stakeholder engagement
- The Cup provides many valuable examples and strategies that could be promoted to help others progress their own efforts to improve whole building sustainability

6.2 Conduct an ongoing Cup Program

Most respondents recommended that the approach adopted by the Cup should be continued. However, it was suggested that it should not be just a 'one off'. Rather, it should form part of a program of Cup activities that would extend over several years.

It would be useful to have a Cup that goes for a period of time but then have it launch straight into another one or something else. It is important to continue. A lot of the messaging around sustainability from our end is that this is a commitment, and it is a journey. Corporate Sustainability Manager

This would support a 'continuous improvement/ journey' approach and enable participants to plan well in advance for the time at which they would like to begin their participation in the Cup. This approach could also establish a goal of 'net zero' that buildings could progressively work towards.

Before embarking on a Cup program it would be relevant to implement changes to further improve the effectiveness of the design. Within this evaluation there have been a number of constructive suggestions to improve the Cup design. These are relatively small improvements rather than wholesale changes. As one Tenant Engagement Manager suggests:

I think probably what I would do is sit down with people that have used it and go through with a bit of a fine tooth comb the actions and points. Consider what to keep and what to remove. Tenant Engagement Manager

The suggestions could be considered by a task group or committee made up of Cup participants with representatives including corporate sustainability managers, property managers, tenant engagement managers and tenant representatives.

The committee could also consider ways of broadening the scale and reach of the Cup including new approaches to promote the Cup and recruit buildings.

It was also suggested that a review could include consideration of International programs to glean additional insights. See for example the material that has been developed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

<https://www.epa.gov/statelocalenergy/energy-efficiency-competitions>.

A related suggestion was that the Cup materials could be developed into a resource to assist building owners to run an inhouse Cup competition across a portfolio of their own buildings and/or for tenants to drive improvements across multiple different buildings.

It would be great to have a version of the Cup where our buildings and the tenants within them can compete against each other and may even against other building owners' portfolios. Corporate Sustainability Manager

Summary

Overall, there was strong support for running another Cup – but more as a continuous program rather than another ‘one off’ initiative. Suggestions for a process of review to further improve the effectiveness of the design include:

- establish a group to review the Cup including suggestions made by stakeholders that have been captured in this evaluation
- consider ways of scaling up to involve more buildings
- review international examples of sustainability gamification
- Bring together the Cup materials in a format to assist building owners and/or tenants to implement the Cup across a portfolio of buildings.

6.3 Utilise a digital platform within other programs such as CitySwitch

The digital platform was an efficient and effective component of the Cup. Key features could be used in other City-based sustainability programs such as CitySwitch or as a mechanism for building owners and tenants to run their own sustainability programs and competitions.

A digital platform incorporated into other programs could:

- enable reporting to be done more frequently. This could streamline the reporting process considerable – making it easier to do and more timely.
- provide a mechanism for participants to ‘pledge’ or commit to implementing particular initiatives and be able to establish the extent to which pledges are actually implemented.
- provide recognition for existing actions
- Make it easy way for tenancies to compare their performance with others
- help CitySwitch program managers to identify and target support to participants in the areas where it is most needed (e.g. where there is inaction or where pledges have been made but not implemented)

Another insight from the Cup is that active management is needed to leverage the benefits of a digital platform. However a digital platform is used it should be combined with sufficient resources to promote it, assist people to use it and to provide advice and support to progress sustainability initiatives.

Summary

- The digital platform was an integral and effective aspect of the Cup.
- Similar platforms should be considered for other programs.
- Digital platforms should be supported with sufficient resources to promote and support the activities of the users.

6.4 Pilot additional behavioural initiatives

The Cup has reinforced the importance of whole building engagement – and the role that behavioural initiatives can play to progress sustainability. While the Cup provides an excellent example of how behavioural change principles can be applied in practice, no single initiative will be appealing or relevant to all buildings.

One of the 10 recommendations of the Global Commission for Urgent Action on Energy Efficiency⁶ (convened by the International Energy Agency in 2020) is to 'leverage behavioural insights for more effective policy⁷.' The report provides the following context:

Learnings from behavioural sciences ('behavioural insights') can inform policy making by ensuring that energy policies are based on a sound understanding of the mechanisms guiding human behaviours. Behavioural insights are important for all policies designed to change individual, household and business behaviours that impact energy consumption and investment in energy efficiency: they can help identify behavioural barriers to policy effectiveness and help redesign policy actions accordingly.

While the Commission was focused on energy efficiency, it is relevant to sustainability more broadly.

To further advance the efforts of the City and the BBP there is an opportunity and need to develop additional R&D and demonstration projects (like the cup) are needed. Some areas in which behavioural insights could apply include:

⁶ <https://www.iea.org/reports/recommendations-of-the-global-commission-for-urgent-action-on-energy-efficiency>

⁷ While the term 'policy' is used here in a government policy context it also applies to the design of 'programs'

- identify better ways to communicate sustainability performance data and other information within buildings
- create additional opportunities for peer comparison of performance
- develop other forms of gamification such as interactive apps focused around particular topics such as energy, waste, water, health and wellbeing
- Explore alternative ways to recognise performance at different levels – including property managers, tenant representatives and individual participants
- apply the Cup in smaller buildings where there are limited resources available for implementation (B&C grade) combined with funding for building upgrades and NABERS ratings.

Summary:

- The Cup has provided valuable insights into the application of behavioural change principles
- There are many more applications of behavioural change principles that could be applied
- These new approaches require piloting to test and demonstrate their effectiveness.

7. Conclusion

7.1 A valuable and unique pilot program

The Better Buildings Cup Pilot has demonstrated how a unique and innovative ‘game-based’ program can accelerate the sustainability performance of commercial buildings

The Cup responds to the need for the development of behaviour-based sustainability programs to drive improvements in the sustainability performance of commercial buildings.

The competitive aspect of the Cup (technically referred to as ‘gamification’) is a particularly valuable mechanism because it provides one way of addressing the tension between growing expectations for building owners to adopt a whole building approach to sustainability and the limited operational control that owners

have over the behaviour of tenants. Similarly, it assists tenants who have sustainability goals and targets to achieve better outcomes through constructive interactions with their building managers. It also provides a mechanism for both property managers and tenant representatives to directly encourage individual action from building occupants.

The main features of the Cup that contribute to its success are:

- access to a digital platform for participants to commit to actions they plan to implement and to recognise sustainability initiatives that they have already implemented.
- a requirement for building stakeholders to work together to improve the sustainability performance of the building as a whole (as distinct from individual tenancies or the base building)
- a 'points-based system' that enables participants to 'pledge' and deliver on actions and to easily compare their performance with other buildings
- An action-oriented focus
- Flexibility in the design that allows organisations (and also individuals) to choose the actions most relevant to them and to their businesses
- A public Leaderboard and monthly reports that provide feedback on planned and implemented actions and the performance of each building relative to other participant buildings
- Ongoing support from City-based program managers to assist participants to implement the Cup successfully.

While the impacts are difficult to quantify due to the limited take-up of the NABERS co-assess rating scheme and no established baseline, there is evidence that the Cup has helped to improve the outcomes from existing stakeholder initiatives (e.g. promoting existing recycling systems and end of trip travel facilities) as well as new, whole building sustainability initiatives (e.g. sustainability events such as 'markets')

This evaluation has identified a number of small changes that can further improve the effectiveness of the Cup.

7.2 Recruiting 'whole buildings' is challenging

Recruiting participants to a program that requires collaboration across multiple organisations presents unique challenges

The Cup required individual buildings to compete against one another. However, the sustainability performance of each building is influenced by multiple organisations including building owners, building managers, tenants and individual

occupants. Participation in the cup relies upon the endorsement and active involvement of each of these organisations.

The decision for buildings to 'sign up' for the Cup was easier in buildings that already had a degree of collaboration between building stakeholders. These stakeholders generally understood the reasons for and benefits of improving the sustainability performance of their building as a whole. Cup participants had typically implemented a variety of sustainability initiatives previously. The Cup assisted these buildings to further improve their sustainability performance as a whole.

Buildings in which there was poor communication between stakeholders, limited existing focus on sustainability or other significant priorities (e.g. tenants that had recently commenced leases) typically did not participate in the Cup. Program managers suggested that some building managers were not keen to participate because of the possibility that their workload may be increased (e.g. due to administration of the cup including increased communication and coordination of building stakeholders) and the potential of heightened tenant expectations that may impact on existing budgets (e.g. through identifying new sustainability initiatives). In some cases, the need to focus on other priorities (e.g. establishing tenants in a new building) meant that buildings did not participate in the Cup due to concerns that participation would potentially channel resources away from existing business priorities.

These challenges are not unexpected for a pilot program. The evaluation highlights the need for additional work on promoting the drivers for and benefits of adopting a whole building approach to sustainability in commercial buildings. Some participants in the Cup have offered to assist to promote these drivers and benefits and there are many examples of good practice engagement that could be shared more widely to assist other practitioners.

7.3 Active program management is essential

Active program management is essential to recruit, build and maintain momentum

The Cup highlighted the benefits of constructive stakeholder relationships (e.g., owner-building manager, building manager-tenants, tenant-tenant) and collaboration to drive additional sustainability improvements in a building. It also provides insights into the ways in which stakeholder relationships can be enhanced.

Access to a program manager that was independent of any single building stakeholder helped to facilitate collaboration. Relevant interventions include:

- kick-off workshops which helped to inform building stakeholders about the Cup while facilitating an interactive process in which participants could share their own experiences
- tenant meetings in which they were seen as an independent and trusted third party that was able to provide expert input on sustainability initiatives as well as insights into the actions being taken in other buildings.

7.4 Property managers and tenant representatives play a critical role

Property managers and tenant representatives are uniquely positioned to influence tenant engagement for sustainability ... but require training and resources

The property management role has become more ‘professionalised’ over recent years. From an engineering focus around ‘keeping the building running’ the role is increasingly focused on ‘customer service’ and emerging issues such as sustainability. Similarly, tenant representatives are increasingly required to progressing an organisation’s sustainability initiatives.

The Cup highlighted that to achieve whole building engagement in sustainability, particular skills and additional resources are required. Skills include an ability to build collaborative relationships based on shared goals. Resource requirements vary but may include additional time to engage with tenants on sustainability, resources to improve building infrastructure (e.g. associated with waste management) and support for initiatives such as building activations.

7.5 Collaboration is key

Ultimately, results-focused collaboration relies on the co-ordinated efforts of multiple stakeholders

The Cup Pilot reinforces the need for cooperation and collaboration in order for buildings to improve their sustainability performance.

Collaboration relies upon the efforts of multiple stakeholders. Throughout the course of the evaluation, a number of 'principles' and effective 'practices' were shared. These have been captured in Appendix A.

Three underlying themes are:

⇒ *Create an ongoing program of tenant engagement*

It is really important to have a constant program of tenant engagement. Some of our really big campaigns throughout the year have really driven engagement. Investa

⇒ *Keep sharing ideas and experience*

I work with other people in our building who are focused on this. It is fantastic, absolutely brilliant. We draw on each other's expertise quite regularly. And we chat all the time about what we're doing. Fiona, KPMG

⇒ *Keep trying different things*

Even simple small things can create high engagement. Sometimes we know what works and that's a trusted thing that we've done and continue to do. And then other times we just kind of think, why don't we just test this and see. Sometimes that works really well and sometimes it doesn't! We are not afraid to try different things. Investa

Practical actions implemented throughout the Cup by key stakeholders at each level have been captured in a checklist in Appendix A.

Appendix A: Practical actions to encourage whole building collaboration for sustainability

Collaboration at the 'whole building' level relies upon the efforts of multiple stakeholders. Throughout the course of the evaluation, a number of effective practices were shared by Cup participants at all levels.

Corporate Sustainability Managers

Corporate sustainability managers or senior managers that have sustainability as part of their role, have an opportunity to shape and influence the strategic approach to sustainability that is adopted within their organisation.

In smaller organisations with fewer management functions the role and influence may be achieved through the work of senior managers assisted with relevant advisory staff.

Actions that corporate sustainability managers can take include:

- Promote the strategic business case and benefits of adopting a 'whole building approach' to management
 - o Include information on the business drivers including investor expectations (e.g. GRESB reporting) and current/future tenant requirements
 - o Highlight the net zero targets and initiatives of other property owners
 - o Articulate the range of direct and indirect benefits of adopting a collaborative approach to sustainability
- Develop an overarching strategy for whole building sustainability that incorporates relevant policies and targets, stakeholder engagement strategies and resourcing requirements
- Promote good practice and the need for and benefits of training for property managers and others that can assist at the operational level to deliver collaborative outcomes
- Create opportunities for property managers to undertake sustainability training and/or to participate in networking events where there is an opportunity to share experiences
- Support bottom-up or home-grown initiatives from buildings where there is already a high level of collaboration and promote the lessons learned to other buildings
- Develop internal networks between relevant senior managers including executive champions and tenant engagement managers
- Offer NABERS co-assess to tenants and assist them with the process. Use the process to identify specific opportunities to improve sustainability performance at the tenant level and work together to realise the benefits.

- Benchmark buildings in portfolio for their sustainability performance as well as the level of tenant engagement.

Property / Facility Managers

Of the many different stakeholders that can influence energy consumption in a building, facilities managers have a unique role to play. That is because they interact regularly with multiple building stakeholders – including senior management, external contractors and building occupants. Also, their day-to-day experience managing the operations of a building means that they develop unique insights into how energy is being consumed and the opportunities for more efficient operations.

Actions that Property/ Facility Managers can take include:

- Promote the strategic and operational benefits of adopting a 'whole building approach' to building stakeholders including building owners, tenants and occupants
- If you already have a tenant engagement program for sustainability then review it and consider ways it can be improved
- If there isn't a program in place consider the business case, options, the resources currently available and the resources required
- Promote the benefits of NABERS co-assess to tenants and the building owner. Use the process to identify specific opportunities to improve sustainability performance at the tenant level and work together to realise the benefits.
- Incorporate sustainability as a standing agenda item for regular tenant meetings
- Undertake sustainability training and/or participate in networking events where there is an opportunity to share experiences

Tenant Representatives

Actions that Tenant Representatives can take include:

- Assess the sustainability policies and resources that are available in the business. This may include identifying and working with a corporate sustainability manager that may be located in another office
- Meet with the property/facility manager to establish their interests and sustainability goals and to share yours
- Work with the property/facility manager to identify the relevant actions that can be taken to improve sustainability and identify those which the property/facility manager can assist with
- Establish a sustainability team within your office and work with them to promote sustainability to their work colleagues

Individual building occupants

Actions that building occupants can take include:

- Ask questions. Find out about the sustainability policies in your office and across your organisation
- Identify the key people in your organisation and building that have an interest in and can influence sustainability. Ask them what actions you could take
- Get involved in a sustainability committee if available and regular tenant management meetings if sustainability is on the agenda