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October 2014

# In Brief

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## Features

# Sustainability Matters More Than Ever

Published: 9th December 2011

Author: i-FM News Team

**Given that a massive 40% of worldwide CO2 emissions come from buildings, property and facilities managers have a unique opportunity to make a real difference.**

We all know that that we're using our planet's scarce resources too quickly. We all try to make small changes in our lifestyles – like turning off lights and recycling our wine bottles – but what about the workplace?

### Sustainability – the new competitive advantage

*“...the growth in ethical consumerism continues to outstrip the market as a whole... this will come as a surprise to those commentators who thought ethical considerations would be the first casualty of an economic downturn...” The Co-operative Financial Services Ethical Consumerism Report*

So, how can property and facilities managers impact on their organisation's green credentials? Our experience tells us that data is the key. Reliable, up-to-date and - most critically - actionable data that allows managers to influence and change behaviour patterns. For any sceptics, don't worry – there are significant cost savings to be had as well as improved green credentials.

It won't come as a surprise that the workplace environment is changing: social influence, market changes and improving technology are key factors. These changes could be negatively viewed by senior management, but let's not dwell on the 'old-school' mindset.

Increasingly, senior management does understand that this is a great opportunity to realign their organisations with their employees' changing needs. Property and facilities managers should similarly embrace these changes – especially as they are intrinsically linked with improvements in sustainability.

BREEAM compliance will be familiar to most. This 'sustainability scan' can significantly impact on both the financial value of your property portfolio, as well as its commercial appeal. With the right technology and processes in place, BREEAM compliance doesn't need to be a concern for building managers.

### Identifying the low-hanging fruit

A recent survey by market research firm

Vanson Bourne noted that a third of FMs did not know the energy usage of their company – and even of those who did, many did not put the information to good use.

With the right software, property and facilities managers can overhaul their measurement and analysis procedures and, importantly, they can make credible, viable recommendations to their boardroom colleagues. Recommendations that save money, reduce emissions and add credibility



to an increasingly educated client/consumer base. How many board directors would turn that proposal down?

Furthermore, there is an increasing statutory requirement on organisations to report on their energy consumption and CO2 footprint. The right software will seamlessly assist with reporting this information, ensuring the organisation is rewarded with the appropriate recognition.

And of course organisations without such functionality, and the benefits it provides, have the financial penalties to look forward to.

*Tim Clapham is UK Marketing Manager for [Planon Software](#).*