

AGM report

The financial year of 2020/21 kicked off with massive news for those who want to transform the building sector in Aotearoa, as the government announced a once in a generation plan to slash emissions from buildings, improve the woeful Building Code and provide a national approach to building that actually provides warm, healthy places for New Zealanders to thrive in.

The Building for Climate Change programme may be perhaps the biggest news ever for green building in New Zealand, and followed a high profile campaign from the Green Building Council, including reports, our zero carbon roadmap, political moments and heaps of headlines.

A strategic priority identified by the board for the year was to grow the uptake of rating tools. The following table shows the registrations in the year, and for NABERSNZ, certifications.

	Target	Achieved	%
Green Star	15	31	207
NABERSNZ	35	50	143
Green Star Performance	1	2	200
Green Star Communities	4	2	50
Homestar	2,950	4,871	165
HomeFit	800	1,971	246

We've celebrated great green buildings of all types over the year, including libraries, churches, hospitals, offices of course, and a hotel.

And industrial buildings too. In August, in a new report on Green Star and industrial buildings, we warned that billions of dollars of industrial buildings could become stranded assets if they couldn't show they are low or zero carbon. The new guidance, for industrial buildings, has been well received, with many industrial buildings taking up Green Star as standard practice.

Homestar and Green Star undergo continuous improvements and updates, and these are overseen by independent advisory panels. Both Green Star and Homestar have an advisory committee and expert review panels, covering energy and carbon, health and wellbeing, products and materials and ecology and emissions.

Underpinning all our work is rock solid operational performance.

The year saw a profit of \$126k against a target for the year of \$2k. Over 600 organisations are now members of the NZGBC. Our retention rate was 87%, against a target of 70%, and member acquisition was \$145,000, against a target of \$70,000.

Thank you to each and every one of you. The NZGBC is a not-for-profit organization, and we are only as strong as our membership and our staff.

Our staff engagement survey shows strong performance relative to not for profits, in the top 25%, a wellness program has been drafted and implemented, and staff retention was 89%.

As we become a more influential and more successful organisation, we're becoming busier too, and the workload on our staff is increasing significantly, seeing a necessary and welcome growth in the permanent team.

In May, we held the biggest ever Green Property Summit. Hundreds of green building advocates packed Auckland's Aotea Centre to hear about the latest initiatives in green buildings and precincts, retrofitting existing buildings, and the policies and opportunities for building green.

The green building showcase also saw green buildings trending on social media and the award of Aotearoa's first certified carbon neutral building. 82 Wyndham Street is the first building to be awarded Toitū carbonzero certification by the NZGBC and Toitū Envirocare. Owned by NZX listed property investment and management company Argosy Property Limited (Argosy), the award makes it the only building in the country to comprehensively record and measure their operational carbon footprint, create set targets for improvement, and entirely offset their emissions.

It wasn't just in the Summit itself that New Zealanders heard great green building stories. To coincide with the event, The Herald published a green building supplement, packed with pieces like [this](#), [this](#) and [this](#), helping to bounce the Summit out of the room and into the hands of thousands of Kiwis.

This was far from the only event we ran this year though. We ran 31 events, which drew a combined audience of over 4,000. We also ran 21 education courses training courses attended by hundreds of people.

Besides our programme of events, we reached huge numbers of New Zealanders through our digital channels. Visitors to our website grew to the largest ever, and grew 20% in the last year. Our social media channels are booming, reaching an engaged and growing audience. Our most engaged audience is on LinkedIn, where our followers have increased by 275% in recent years.

Our growing Future Thinkers network held great, thought provoking events too. And in a very strong field, Meredith Dale was crowned Future Thinker of the Year in April.

In September, we put healthy homes on the general election agenda when National threatened to scrap the healthy homes standards, spotting an opportunity and coordinating a headline-grabbing coalition which backed the healthy homes standards.

Also in September, following pressure from the NZGBC, the government announced that all 138 departments and agencies will have to assess the carbon emissions for their new building projects, and to choose the lowest embodied carbon options. As the most significant owner and occupier of buildings in Aotearoa, this government shift sent a strong message to the rest of the sector that acting to tackle climate change is increasingly unavoidable.

In December, as part of the plans for a zero carbon public sector, the government committed to using NABERSNZ for their own buildings in bid to drive down emissions. However, there's much more the government could be doing to get carbon out of their buildings, so we're hoping this is just the first step. NABERSNZ is great, but can only measure the energy efficiency of office buildings, so isn't applicable across all of the public sector buildings, many of which aren't offices.

The year also saw the release of the much anticipated advice from the Climate Change Commission. After initially failing to adequately mention the important role buildings can play to tackle our climate pollution, it was very welcome to see the Commission's final advice changed. Tackling the carbon pollution of our homes and buildings will not just go a long way to beat climate change. It will also give New Zealanders healthier, cosier homes, with lower household bills. But in too many ways the Commission's final advice falls short, and we're still concerned about the level of ambition.

The Commission heard our feedback that embodied emissions, from the likes of concrete and steel, represent a significant proportion of building sector pollution and support the call for government to prioritise action on this in the first emissions budget.

Energy efficiency improvements are often the best and lowest-cost option for reducing energy demand and emissions, and this needs to be a priority at the heart of the National Energy Strategy the commission propose. The Commission recommended more action on energy efficiency measures calling for 'Government to have, by 31 December 2022, implemented measures to improve the energy performance of existing buildings, such as mandating participation in energy performance programmes'..

Mandatory NABERS in Australia in 2009 has delivered \$1bn in savings for Australian businesses. The NZGBC will continue to call for government to mandate that buildings transparently display the energy efficiency of the office buildings.

Reducing energy demand can decrease the total amount of energy the system needs to supply and related infrastructure that needs to be built. It also delivers huge health benefits for Kiwi households.

The Commission called for scaling up on energy efficiency for households. Let's be ambitious. Improving buildings in this way has the best jobs return of any policy decision, and also delivers real health benefits. There should be a doubling in the rate of insulation improvement to homes, we said, and an expansion of the programme to include other measures such as draughts, and lighting efficiency that drive down carbon and hugely improve health so as to align with the Healthy Homes Standard. Since we called for these measures, the government have responded by doubling the insulation rates.

It's important for us to walk the talk, and for the NZGBC to measure our own carbon emissions too, and hold ourselves to account. We're now doing that, and have reported on our own emissions for the last couple of years, as members of the Climate Leaders Coalition.

The future

This report formally covers FY2020/21 but our work didn't stop on 30 June 2021. Since the start of the new financial year we've launched the most ambitious update of Homestar ever, following our most successful consultation. Homestar now has an much increased

focus on carbon. Thank you to the hundreds of you who got involved and shared your knowledge and expertise about how to make Homestar the best it can be.

We've also recently reviewed how the government has progressed on hitting the milestones we laid out in our zero carbon roadmap, plus whether they have delivered on election campaign promises. Overall, we concluded that the government is failing to adequately slash the carbon emissions of New Zealand's buildings, thereby threatening its ability to meet international climate change obligations.

We will continue to hold the government to account. Without a zero carbon built environment, we will never realise a zero carbon Aotearoa. Our work will continue to make sure government delivers an ambitious and timely Building for Climate Change programme.

Following the successful rollout of the new Homestar, we will continue to improve your green building certification programmes, increasing their ambition and balancing that with a greater ease of use, shifting more of the process online.

Embodied carbon will be of greater and greater importance, as operational emissions drop. An embodied carbon calculator is now in the new version of Homestar - the first time a NZ green homes scheme used at scale has one. Lower embodied carbon in Homestar will be mandatory in the future as assessment capacity builds.

And Green Star will be updated in early 2022 to provide a framework for measuring embodied carbon and will ratchet up performance on embodied carbon over time.

It's been a great year for green buildings, and probably the most successful year ever for the Green Building Council.

We've seen over the last year the importance of community, of strong supportive relationships and doing what's right. Thank you for all your support of our work and the vision we have for Aotearoa.

The Zero Carbon Road Map for Aotearoa's Buildings is delivering real tangible results. With your help and support we will continue to see progress in driving more change in the building code and through existing buildings and homes, delivering a greater number of healthier lower carbon places.

We look forward to working with you to get even more done in the upcoming year as we continue to work toward a lower carbon, brighter future for Aotearoa New Zealand.