



# HOW TO ENGAGE YOUR LANDLORD



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An easy 'win' on the journey to net zero is to change to a renewable energy provider, alongside lots of other actions in the running of your building - but what if you have a landlord and they aren't engaged? Andy Haigh, Director of Climate Positive Solutions at Grosvenor has shared his thoughts.



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# THE CONTEXT

As a building owner, your landlord is part of the built environment sector, so first we want to provide some context around this and why climate action should be important to your landlord.

The UK Green Building Council (UKGBC) states that 22% of the UK's emissions come from the operation and embodied carbon of the built environment. To ensure the UK meets its net zero 2050 target, the built environment sector needs to rapidly decarbonise. This means that how we design, build and manage buildings is critical to our success.

As 80% of the buildings which will be standing in 2050 have already been built, the operation and refurbishment of our existing building stock is a major priority. There is however a barrier to driving efficiency and emission reductions across existing buildings – the landlord/ tenant debate - and who pays.

Increasingly large property companies see the value in upgrading their building stock as they see this as integral to their long-term business plan. With legislation changes such as Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES), and the recently consulted legislation on mandatory energy efficiency reporting for commercial office



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buildings, there's an increasing risk for landlords in owning stranded assets if they do not ensure they are energy efficient both in their design (EPC) and operation. As such, at Grosvenor we have a £90m retrofit and energy efficiency fund which we'll deploy over the course of this decade to upgrade our existing building stock and ensure that it aligns to our Net Zero Carbon Pathway.

Grosvenor isn't alone, and there are a growing number of property owners with net zero ambitions. 26 of the biggest investors in the UK, with over £375 billion of assets under management have created net zero carbon pathways and are signatories of the BBP Climate Change Commitment. However, there are also many property owners who are still starting on this journey, and even more yet to begin.



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# WHAT CAN YOU DO?

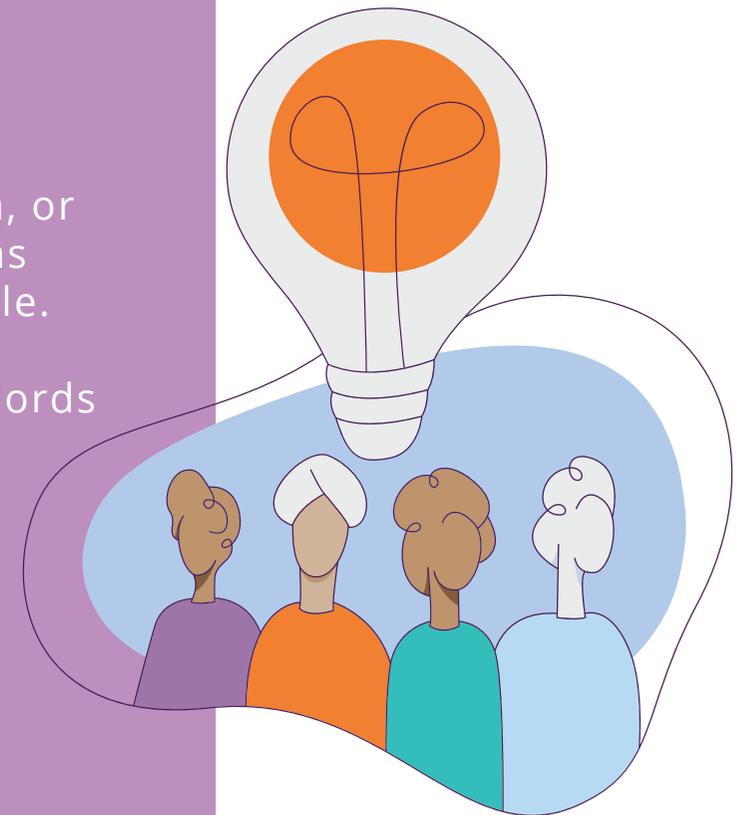
How then do progressive tenants engage with landlords to push for energy efficiency improvements?

The most important thing is to **start a dialogue**. There are a lot of perceived barriers, but many of these are unrealised once both sides have an honest discussion about the topic, so step one is to pick up the phone.

**Make sure you're talking to the right person.** The asset manager or accounts manager may not be best suited to answer your questions, so make sure the person you're speaking to has the authority to approve and support any activities.

**Be clear on what you need.** Are you just asking for utility data, or are you thinking of making improvements to your demise? Be as clear as possible about what you're asking for and keep it simple.

**Frame the discussion around collective benefits.** Many landlords who aren't already pushing for net zero will be more willing to support you if they think that they could benefit too. Similarly, if you need your landlord to do additional work (e.g. providing utility data), talk about how this could benefit them (e.g.



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reduced energy consumption and central plant requirements through tenant operational efficiencies - reducing their overheads as a result).

**Talk to other tenants.** Collective action can be an immensely powerful tool. If there are multiple other tenants, invariably some will also be interested in joining you on this journey.

**Use your purchasing power.** If your landlord won't play ball, then find one who does. The more occupiers who demand energy efficient and carbon neutral or net zero ready properties, the quicker the industry will change.



*Climate for SMEs: 4 Steps to Action is funded by the City of London Corporation in support of its Climate Action Strategy targets for a net zero and resilient Square Mile*



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