

# THE FUTURE WORKPLACE AND NEW FRONTIERS FOR SMARTER WORKING

SCOTTISH FUTURES TRUST



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When a workplace is designed to be a hub of inspiration, connection, creativity and energy, there's no doubt that innovation will follow.

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## INTRODUCTION

“IF YOU CAN WORK FROM ANYWHERE WHY WOULD YOU COME INTO THE OFFICE?”

The office and its purpose is at a critical crossroads. The current Global Covid-19 Pandemic has disrupted lives on an unprecedented scale - one that was unimaginable at the beginning of this year. It has forced office workers to work from home and this has become the norm for many people. So as we look to the future what will our working lives look like and importantly, why would we come back into the office?

This pause has created the opportunity to re-evaluate our aspirations and consider what is important. In May 2020, Form Design Consultants carried out a survey to understand how people were feeling, and what their experiences of working at home were, with a view to using the findings to help us design better workplaces for our Clients. The results echoed that of many subsequent studies (BCO, JLL and Leesman), these being;

- Most people would like to continue working from home 2 -3 days a week.
- The vast majority missed the **social, collaboration** and **learning experience** the office provides.
- Whilst the majority of people were looking forward to returning to the office, many had concerns over **hygiene** and **commuting**.
- Working at home inhibits the key **spontaneous encounters** we have when we are in the office.
- There may be learned behaviors during “lockdown” period that endure, e.g. less travelling to meetings, using hand sanitisers and greater access to the natural world.

Our vision of The Future Workplace puts **people at the heart** of the equation and considers the key elements that are essential to binding this together. We see the office as an **ecosystem** that embraces all the places employees work to foster innovation, support teamwork and learning whilst connecting to homes and hubs. Creativity thrives in an environment where people are free to choose how to work, where to work and they are free to switch off. This approach is embraced by **Smarter Working** principles and approaching office design as a ‘**kit of parts**’, which can change and adapt. The workplace also needs to provide a sense of place, which importantly, is able to reflect and embody the organisation’s culture.

We see the enabler to The Future Workplace as the balance of two critical elements: **Health and Wellbeing** and **Technology**.

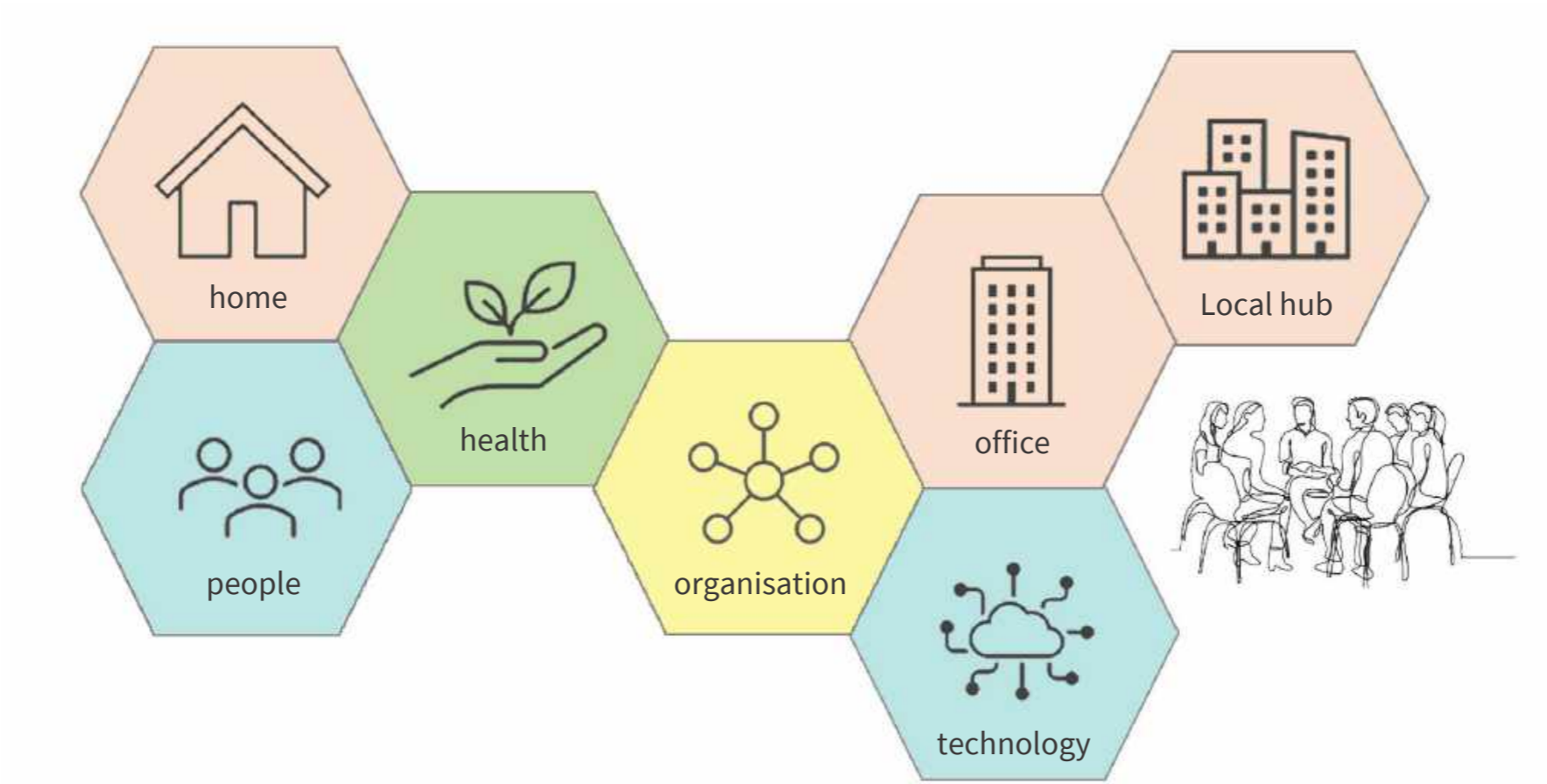
By putting **Health and Wellbeing** at the forefront of office design we are seeking to create workplaces that actively take responsibility for a Carbon Net Zero future. A workplace that is sustainable, has a healthy physical environment and supports the mental health of the users will in turn help to create a **Resilient Workplace** that can adapt to the inevitable changes of our future. The key elements of Health and Wellbeing are set out on page five and form a thread through our graphical vision of The Future Workplace.

**Technology** plays a major part in The Future Workplace. While working from home people have become adept at using technology, such as Microsoft Teams and Zoom, to stay connected to colleagues and “meet” with clients. Technology is advancing exponentially, and it is critical that the right technology is embraced to best support and harness innovation in the office, between networks and to support the Resilient Office. The key technology elements are explored on page six and are considered through our graphical representation of the Future Workplace.

Our vision for **The Future Workplace** is represented through a day in the life scenario. It demonstrates how Health and Wellbeing and Technology can fully support Smarter Working and ultimately a Resilient Workplace which can flex and adapt.



Creating spaces that allow people to interact in spontaneous and unplanned ways









ALL THESE ELEMENTS CONNECT



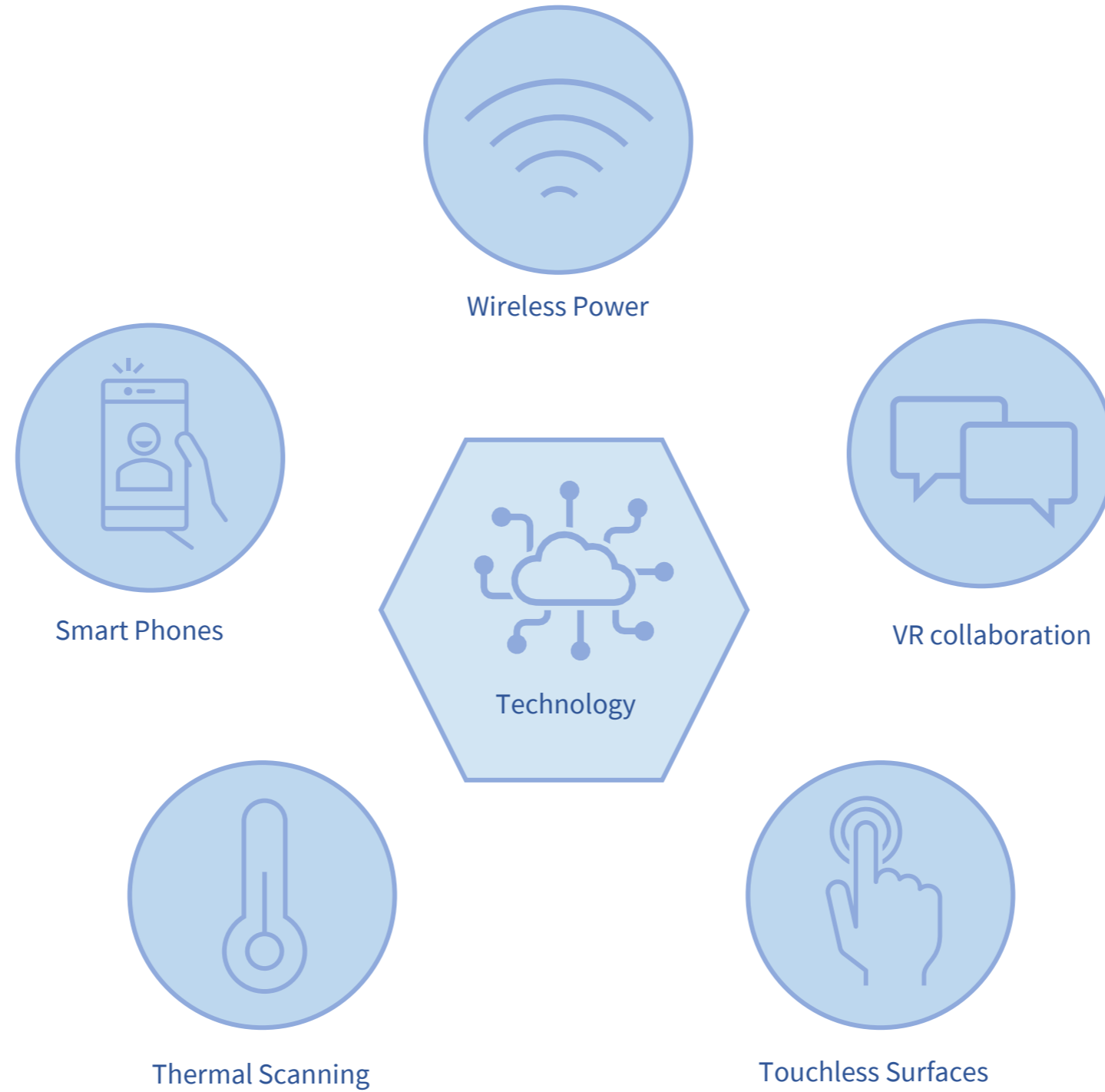
AT THE HEART OF OFFICE DESIGN

# HEALTH AND WELLBEING ELEMENTS



						
<p><b>Healing layout + Comfort</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Space representing company culture</li> <li>• Diversity of spaces</li> <li>• Acoustic separation</li> <li>• Inclusive Design</li> </ul>	<p><b>(day)lighting and colour</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Natural light and low glare</li> <li>• Circadian rhythm</li> <li>• Use of colour to aid function of space</li> <li>• Daylight harvesting -.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Sustainability</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Designing using the principles of a Circular Economy and aiming towards a Carbon Net Zero Future</li> </ul>	<p><b>Nourishment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthy food options provided.</li> <li>• Easy access to drinking water</li> <li>• Hand washing and sanitisation stations</li> </ul>	<p><b>Biophilia + perceptual factors</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Direct and indirect indoor features of biophilia</li> <li>• Food production in the office</li> <li>• Diversifying office design features (climbing walls, yoga and fitness spaces)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Indoor air quality + thermal health</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Air quality, ventilation design and air filters</li> <li>• Controlling humidity</li> <li>• Personal control over the indoor environment</li> <li>• Cleanability of surfaces</li> </ul>	<p><b>Active design</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generous circulation routes</li> <li>• Support active commute to work</li> <li>• Flexible spaces for fitness classes</li> <li>• Choice of work settings</li> <li>• Inclusive design</li> </ul>

# TECHNOLOGY ELEMENTS



## Thermal Scanning

- Thermal scanning linked with security building entry to provide unintrusive health security



## Smart Phones

- Enabling contactless access to building, room and space booking, access to lockers control of environment, record and take notes for talking meetings, making coffee, submit work request for e.g. sanitisation, monitor occupancy levels



## Wireless Power

- Long range wireless power technology and wireless data to enable full flexibility



## VR Collaboration

- Video conferencing, augmented/virtual reality
- VR meeting rooms allowing collaboration

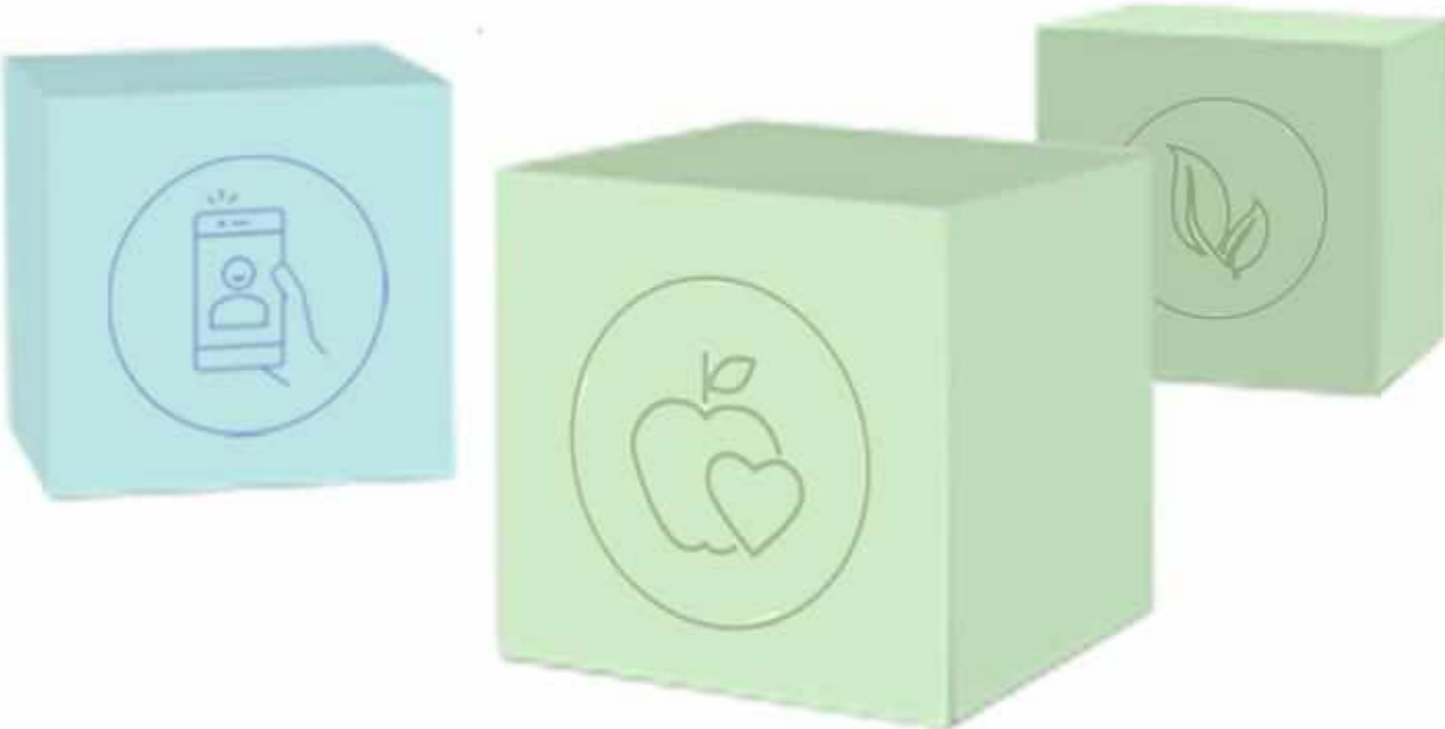


## Touchless Surfaces

- Access to lifts, doors, taps etc via voice control technology eliminating the need to touch surfaces

**THE BUILDING BLOCK CONCEPT**

Our concept is an **ecosystem** of building blocks...



By designing an 'office of the future' with people at the heart of the equation we can embrace **Smarter Working** by utilising a '**kit of parts**' which can change and adapt.



By adopting this principle it provides a **resilient** environment which has unlimited potential. By fostering future technologies in a way which supports this new way of working, we can continue to connect with colleagues and clients in an **inclusive** and progressive way.

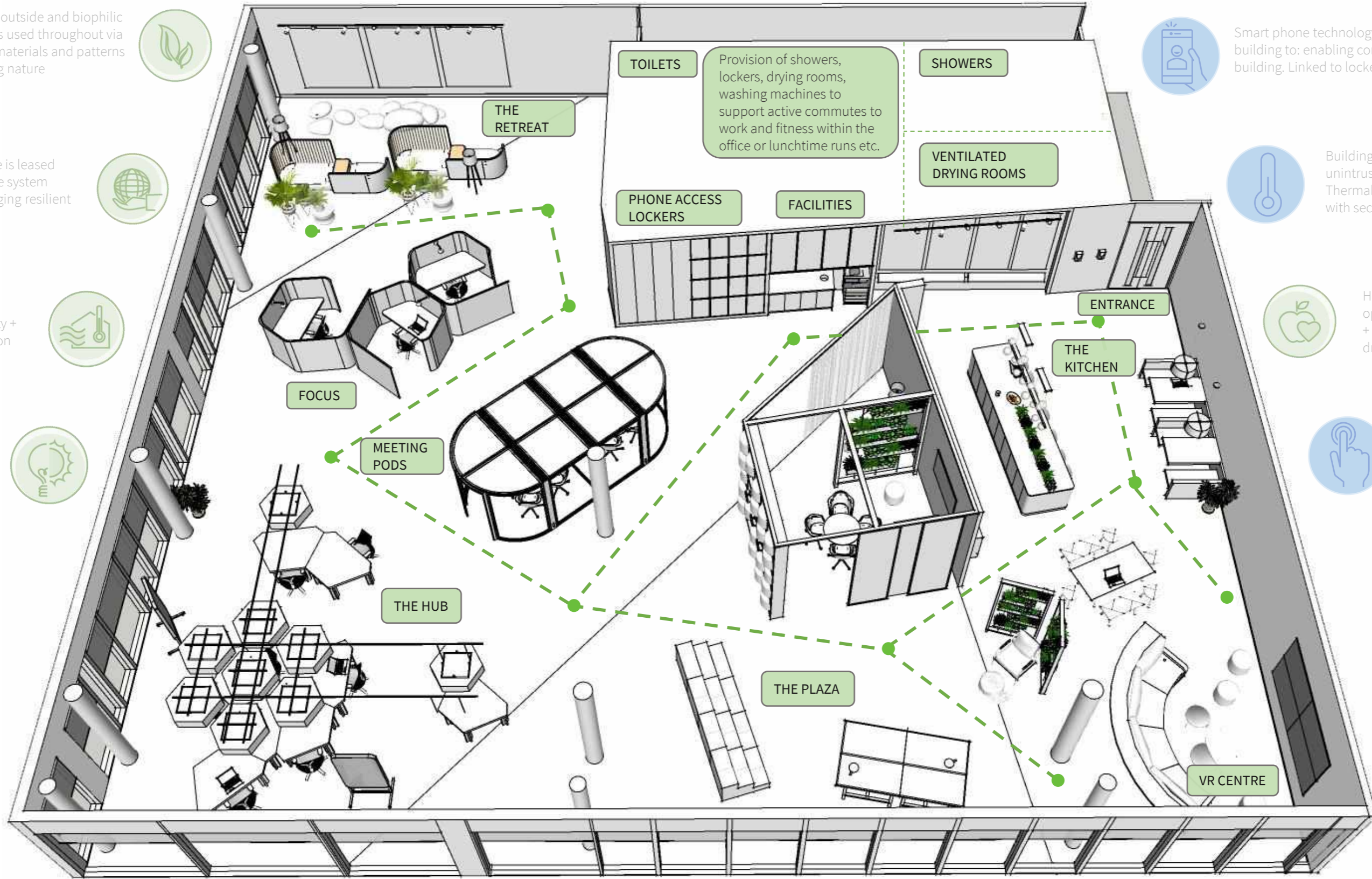
# THE FUTURE WORKPLACE – A DAY IN THE LIFE

Views to outside and biophilic elements used throughout via natural materials and patterns reflecting nature

Furniture is leased /reusable system encouraging resilient design

Air quality + ventilation

Natural daylight



Smart phone technology linked to the building to: enabling contactless access to building. Linked to lockers

Building entry to provide unintrusive health security Thermal scanning linked with security

Healthy food options provided. + easy access to drinking water

Touchless surfaces – lifts + doors, hand sanitizer

Choice of workspaces and inclusive design which are all flexible to allow for future change

Long range wireless power technology and wireless data to enable full flexibility

Generous circulation routes to encourage walking, spontaneous meetings, resilience if future social distancing required

Video conferencing, augmented/virtual reality VR meeting rooms allowing collaboration



## ARRIVAL

### A Day In The Life...

Meet James. He has decided to visit the office for a few hours today. He has some concerns regarding the use of public transport, such as hygiene and the environmental impact, therefore he has parked his bike in the secure, enclosed bike storage.



After having his temperature scanned using a thermal scanner at the entrance, he knows he is safe to enter the building.

He uses his phone to gain access the main building, eliminating the need to touch any surfaces.

He can now safely proceed to the showers, and use the buildings washing machines to clean his cycling gear and leave it in the drying room.

## THE KITCHEN

James uses the hand wash dispensers upon arrival, it just feels natural to him now.



He enters the kitchen area and uses an app on his phone to make a cup of coffee, grabbing some fresh fruit provided by the company as a healthy snack, he gives it a wash under the touchless taps before eating.

He decides to give the herbs and vegetables a quick water so others can use them on their salads.



## THE KITCHEN

James enjoys the buzz of the kitchen as he catches up with colleagues. He misses this greatly when working from home.

He utilises the perch seating to have a quick chat regarding a project he's been working on with one of his colleagues. We call these chance meetings 'micro moments'.

The change of scenery helps him to feel stimulated and it's good to be up and moving around.

He feels safe in this environment knowing that the solid surface worktops and copper handles, coupled with the new touchless technology is helping to keep the area as hygienic as possible.



## THE PLAZA

He grabs his own set of VR goggles. He has a virtual meeting in an hour and he can utilise a 1 person seating area for this.

Once he's finished his meeting his colleagues will slide back the partitions to create an open space for an afternoon exercise class.

He can use the sliding partitions if he requires a more private setting. This is more useful than the solid offices used to have.





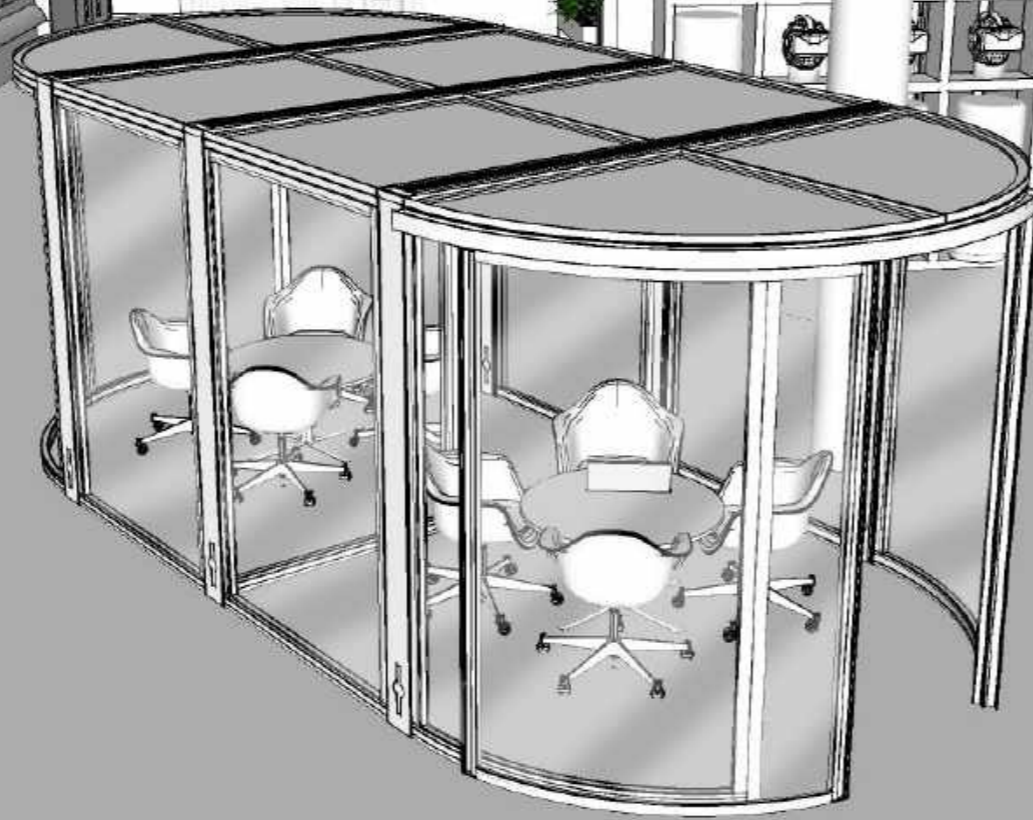
A larger group of colleagues have requested to use the plaza, but not to worry, there are plenty of other meeting spaces for James to use.

The large VC space in the open plan social area is a possibility, but this is mainly used for social interactions with colleagues working at home, which helps them to feel included with something other than meetings.

He opts to use one of the acoustic meeting pods for his VR meeting.

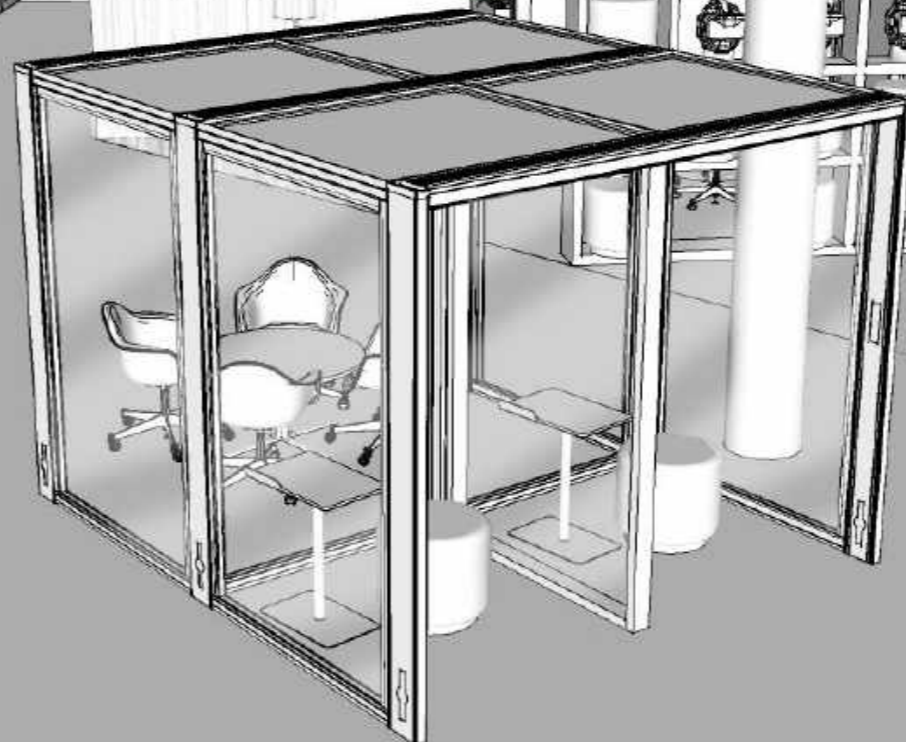


**MEETING**



The great thing about these pods is that they are composed of individual components, rented from a company which reuses furniture between offices to reduce waste.

They can be moved to a new office location in the future, unlike solid partitions, or sent back to the company to be reused by someone else who needs them.



This makes for a more resilient office space, you never know what the future will bring!



## THE RETREAT



James had a rough night last night with the baby crying, but he has a report to write. He takes an opportunity for a 20 minute power nap in the wellness area. This will allow him to work on his report refreshed and with a clear head.

This no tech zone is a relaxing environment for James to get some much needed rest. The nature wall, noise cancelling headphones and lower lighting levels in here mean he and his colleagues can escape the buzz of the office when they need to, improving mental health all round.



**THE HUB**



To write his report, James chooses to sit at one of the moveable tables in the open plan area. He makes use of the mobile acoustic ceiling rafts and uses the handles to pull it over his table.

The new wireless power technology means that he doesn't have to worry about floor boxes or lighting, his laptop will charge wherever he is in the space without having to touch any switches.

A short while later however, a few people have moved the tables together for some collaboration time, and their voices are distracting James.





**FOCUS**

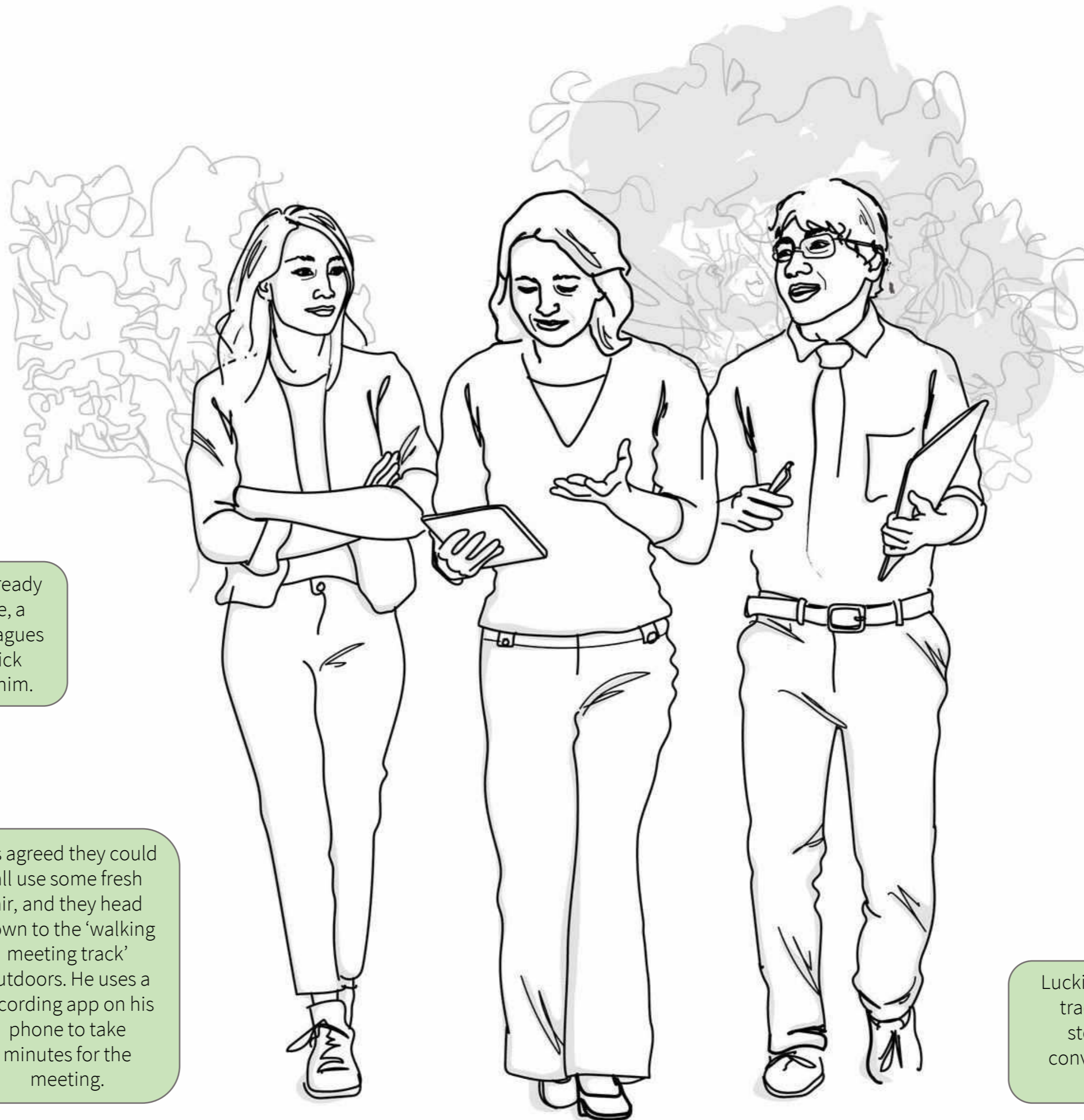


Not to worry!  
James easily  
moves his laptop  
into one of the  
focused work  
pods, which have  
acoustic barriers.

It is feeling a bit  
chillier over here  
though, so he uses  
the app on his  
phone to adjust  
the local thermal  
levels to suit his  
comfort.



## DEPARTURE



As James gets ready to head home, a couple of colleagues request a quick meeting with him.

It's agreed they could all use some fresh air, and they head down to the 'walking meeting track' outdoors. He uses a recording app on his phone to take minutes for the meeting.

Luckily, the walking meeting track ends near the bike storage, so James can conveniently head straight home from there.

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Form Design Consultants  
27/2 George Street  
Edinburgh  
EH2 3PA

T: +44 (0131) 602 7003  
W: [formdc.com](http://formdc.com)

Rodi McLean  
Managing Director  
[rodi@formdc.com](mailto:rodi@formdc.com)  
m. 07947 664334

Andy Sives  
Director  
[andy@formdc.com](mailto:andy@formdc.com)  
m. 07305 300944