

# UK Net Zero Carbon Buildings Standard

Plan for measured performance and the right verified claim from the start.

Version 1.0 | Prepared and reviewed: 9 September 2026 | 5-minute read

Status: Voluntary building standard; mandatory requirements apply when seeking conformity.

Audience: Developers, building owners, landlords, occupiers and project delivery teams.

## Executive summary

The UK Net Zero Carbon Buildings Standard gives owners and project teams a shared basis for demonstrating building performance aligned with UK carbon goals. Version 1 was published in March 2026 and verification opened in July 2026.<sup>[1]</sup> It applies to new buildings, existing assets and retrofits. A design calculation alone does not establish alignment: the in-use route needs measured evidence and independent verification.<sup>[2][3]</sup> Decide the assessment scope, evidence responsibilities and intended claim before fixing design commitments or promising an outcome to investors and occupiers.

**Start here.** Choose one candidate building and agree its assessment scope, target verification route and data responsibilities with the owner and project team.

**In plain terms.** The Standard connects design ambitions with actual building performance. It covers energy and carbon outcomes, checked by an accredited verifier. Earlier-stage progress can also be verified, but each outcome supports a different claim and must be described accurately.<sup>[2][3]</sup>

## Choose the claim you can evidence

| Route                   | What it establishes                                                                                                                                        |
|-------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Net Zero Carbon Aligned | All applicable requirements met, after at least a year of occupancy and measurement. <sup>[3]</sup>                                                        |
| Performance Evaluation  | Verified performance, including failures against requirements. This is not Net Zero Carbon Aligned status. <sup>[3]</sup>                                  |
| PC On Track             | Optional whole-building check within 6 months of Practical Completion. Later in-use verification is required; this is not alignment status. <sup>[3]</sup> |

## Build the evidence into delivery

Requirements address embodied carbon, operational energy, fossil fuels, renewable generation, electricity demand, heating and cooling, refrigerants and water.<sup>[4]</sup> Ask the assessor to identify limits, targets and exceptions for the building type, works and relevant year. A headline office limit will not suit every sector or retrofit.

In-use verification can cover a whole building or an eligible landlord-only or tenant-only scope.<sup>[3]</sup> Agree responsibility for shared services, tenant consumption and meter access before occupation. Keep material evidence alongside operational records and budget for annual re-verification.<sup>[2]</sup>

## Example in practice

Illustrative example: an office reaches Practical Completion with encouraging modelling and material records. Its owner seeks a PC On Track check and arranges tenant meter access. Marketing names that outcome accurately while the team gathers evidence for later in-use verification.

## Recommended actions

A practical way to start, with suggested owners and timing:

1. **Confirm the scope.** Select the building or eligible landlord/tenant boundary and intended claim. Record who will be the claimant and who approves changes affecting the assessment. *Asset owner, before project commitments.*
2. **Translate requirements into the brief.** Create a project schedule of applicable criteria, limits and evidence. Assign each item to a responsible discipline and resolve exceptions with the appointed specialists. *Design and assessment leads, before design approval.*
3. **Preserve delivery evidence.** Link quantities, product records, substitutions and commissioning results to the assessment. Check that handover requirements capture information otherwise lost when packages close. *Contractor and procurement, during design and construction.*
4. **Plan operational measurement.** Agree metering, tenant data access, reporting periods and quality checks. Keep an evidence schedule that covers shared systems and clear routes for resolving missing records. *Facilities team and occupiers, before occupation.*
5. **Arrange independent verification.** Confirm the current submission process with an accredited verifier. Use the precise outcome, boundary and period in communications, and keep a plan for correcting shortfalls and re-verification. *Owner, before claims and each renewal.*

## Common mistakes and what to do instead

- Promising alignment at design stage: distinguish an ambition from a verified outcome.
- Using optional offsets to excuse failed requirements: demonstrate core conformity first.<sup>[4]</sup>
- Treating a landlord-only outcome as whole-building approval: state the verified boundary.

## How Reinventives can help

Reinventives can organise a readiness review, evidence register and delivery plan, connecting design, procurement and facilities teams. The first deliverable can be a criterion-by-criterion responsibility and data-gap map for one building. We can coordinate technical input and verification preparation; specialist assessors and accredited verifiers retain their respective assessment and independent verification roles.

**Book a construction reporting conversation: [reinventives.co.uk/construction/book](https://reinventives.co.uk/construction/book)**

Related briefing notes: [BN005 Embodied carbon](#) | [BN006 EPDs](#) | [BN011 Reliable carbon data](#)

## Sources and review dates

[1] UK NZCBS, Version 1 and resource suite, March 2026; verification launch July 2026.

[2] UK NZCBS, About Verification; independent review and annual re-verification.

[3] UK NZCBS, Verification Routes; in-use, Performance Evaluation and PC On Track.

[4] UK NZCBS, What is the Standard; performance coverage and claims.

Access note: this briefing uses the publisher's accessible Version 1 and verification guidance. The full Standard download was not accessible for this review; confirm detailed clauses, limits and annexes before a project assessment.

Correct as of and sources accessed 9 September 2026 | Next review 9 December 2026

Review earlier if the Standard, applicable annexes, verification rules or claim wording changes.

This briefing is general information, not legal, procurement, engineering or assurance advice. Requirements should be checked for the specific organisation, project and contract.