



ISOS HOUSING GROUP ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY

CONTENT

- 1.0 Introduction**
- 2.0 Background & Context**
- 3.0 Defining Environmental Sustainability**
- 4.0 The RSL Context**
- 5.0 The Isos Context**
- 6.0 Action**
 - 6.1 Scope**
 - 6.2 Consultation**
 - 6.3 Measures of Success**
- 7.0 Summary**



ISOS HOUSING GROUP ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY

1.0 Introduction

The purpose of the Environmental Sustainability Strategy is to contribute to the delivery of the Isos Group Vision, of 'Providing Quality Homes in Thriving Communities'.

Isos Housing Group consists of a parent company (IHL) and 3 operating companies; Milecastle Housing Limited, NomadE5 Housing Association Limited and Castle Morpeth Housing Limited.

Isos Housing Group recognises that it has, as a Registered Social Landlord (RSL), with approaching 12,000 homes and as an employer with over 300 employees, a significant contribution to make towards increasing sustainability and reducing environmental harm.

If everyone worldwide was to live like we do in the UK we would need three planets to sustain us. The department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) talks about us needing to achieve a one planet future.

This strategy aims to reduce the impact of the Group's activities on the environment. This includes managing homes and neighbourhoods, building homes, running the Group's businesses, investment and improving lives of Isos customers, communities and staff.

This must involve long-term thinking. New homes are built to last for a minimum of 60 years and in reality, many homes last for much longer than that. The UK's existing housing stock is responsible for 27 per cent of the UK's total carbon emissions. Around 85 per cent of the existing housing stock will still be standing in 2050, so it is imperative that the Group takes action to meet its target of reducing carbon emissions.

Each decision made now which enhances sustainability will have a long term effect.

2.0 Background & Context

Environmental pressures are now widely recognised across the globe. The United Nations Climate Change Conference in December 2009 aims to achieve an ambitious global agreement in reducing CO² emissions worldwide. It is recognised that quick action must now be taken to reduce the impact of climate change. Many consequences of climate change are already visible and we can



ISOS HOUSING GROUP ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY

expect more unless adjustments are made.

Environmental issues are now also high on the political agenda, more so than ever before, which will impact on businesses and individuals worldwide, including Isos Housing Group.

The Government has created a single government department to tackle climate change. The Department for Energy and Climate Change (DECC) has three overall objectives:

- Ensuring our energy is secure, affordable and efficient;
- Bringing about the transition to a low-carbon Britain;
- Achieving an international agreement on climate change at Copenhagen in December 2009.

Isos is committed to promoting sustainability by ensuring that it becomes a key area for consideration in all decision making processes.

This strategy interfaces with a number of key Isos Housing Group strategies. The objectives that Environmental Sustainability will help deliver contribute to the following;

- The Acquisition and Development Strategy
- The Asset Management Strategy
- The Customer First Strategy
- The Equality and Diversity Policy
- The Financial Inclusion Strategy
- The Group Improvement Plan
- The Group Procurement Strategy
- The Value For Money Strategy

All of the strategies together contribute to the delivery of the Group Business Plan.

3.0 Defining Environmental Sustainability

One of the most significant definitions of environmental sustainability was given by the Brundtland Commission, led by the former Norwegian Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland, who defined it as development that "meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own



ISOS HOUSING GROUP ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY

needs."

Isos is committed to developing a sustainable approach in all its activities. We understand 'sustainability' to have two particular strands:

- Creating sustainable communities, by which we mean working to ensure that the neighbourhoods we work in and help to create are ones which have a long term future where people want to live and where their lives can flourish.
- Working to reduce our 'carbon footprint'. We can do this by paying attention to how we manage our operations and how we buy products, whether they are for our offices, for the new homes we are building or for the existing homes we are maintaining.

4.0 The RSL Context

There are numerous external drivers which impact on this strategy. The following are examples of initiatives that associations leading the way on environmental sustainability are progressing:

- Achieving Code Level 3 and above of The Code for Sustainable Homes. It is currently mandatory to build to Code Level 3 as a minimum and to Code Level 6 ('carbon neutral') by 2016.
- Energy Performance Certificates are now mandatory for all RSL homes.
- Green retrofitting / Eco-Homes XB for existing homes. This is currently voluntary but will probably become mandatory. The possible introduction of Decent Homes 2 will focus on retrofit.
- The Construction Commitments: Halving Waste to Landfill - Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP). Currently voluntary participation.
- SHIFT (Sustainable Homes Index For Tomorrow) initiative- assessment of an organisation's sustainability performance (including carbon footprint) and recommendations on how to improve. Currently voluntary participation.
- Various water, energy and waste initiatives. Voluntary participation.
- Use/purchase of 'green energy'. Voluntary participation.



ISOS HOUSING GROUP ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY

- Use of environmentally friendly building/office materials. Voluntary participation.
- Achieving ISO 14001 Environmental Management System. Voluntary participation.

This is not an exhaustive list of activities being carried out in the RSL sector but gives a flavour of actions. Some of Isos Housing Group's counterparts are taking the initiative and opportunity on leading on this area which has historically been overlooked by the housing sector, and are being noticed by gaining a plethora of awards in recognition of their work.

5.0 The Isos Context

This strategy recognises the context in which the Group operates. The key Isos Group strategies which link to this strategy, highlighted in section 2.0, will result in us making changes to the ways we have traditionally selected and purchased products, how we manage our operations and to make changes which will be of environmental benefit now and in the future.

The strategy contributes directly to the Group Vision which is to 'provide quality homes in thriving communities', and contributes to the following specific business aims;

- *Building new homes and improving existing ones so we meet housing need and have a positive environmental impact*
- *Putting benefit to residents at the heart of everything we do, working with them to continually improve our services.*
- *Working with partners to deliver sustainable communities to enhance the life quality of our customers.*

The Group is currently undertaking a number of activities to the benefit of the environment. It is building to Code Level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes, helping to increase the Groups overall SAP (Standard Assessment Procedure) rating. The SAP is the Government's recommended system for energy rating of dwellings. The Group is also involved in ad hoc take up of the Carbon Emissions Reduction Target (CERT) funding for insulations programmes and energy efficient light bulbs. Air source heat pumps have been successfully installed in 2 existing properties.



ISOS HOUSING GROUP ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY

The Group will pursue ongoing external funding opportunities, pilot new techniques and review policies and procedures in order to support its activities in delivering this strategy. A joined up and planned approach will be achieved through the delivery of the strategy's action plans.

6.0 Action

The Group is committed to minimising negative environmental impacts as far as possible in;

- Developing new and maintaining existing homes
- Managing our communities
- Conduct of our normal business operations.

The strategy aims to provide a framework to ensure corporate environmental awareness and embed attitudes leading to the provision of environmentally aware policies, practices, services and products.

In every project, operation or activity we undertake, consideration will be given to the impact on the environment and community.

6.1 Scope

To communicate this strategy, work will be grouped into three main sections:

- Internal operations
- Housing – new build
- Housing – maintenance and refurbishment.

These three activities impact on individuals, society and the natural environment, and an action plan for each of these areas will be developed as part of the strategy. The action plans will be regularly updated with good practice and new information from within and outside the RSL sector.

For each section the action plans will address eight issues. These are:

- Energy
- Materials
- Waste
- Transport
- Water
- Land
- Landscape
- Society



ISOS HOUSING GROUP ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY

For each issue, two categories of response will be considered:

- Behavioural measures including policies, practices and services
- Physical measures including design, technology and materials.

6.2 Consultation

The process of strategy development and ongoing implementation of actions will involve Board members with regular reporting and through Board Strategy Group meetings.

Resident involvement is integral to the strategy. Residents will be involved through existing customer panels and area based involvement forums in the development of the action plans. The level of promotion and education that may be required, especially across minority communities, will be taken into consideration within the action plan. Staff will also be involved in the development and monitoring of the action plans.

6.3 Measures of Success

The success of this strategy will be achieved through the delivery of the three actions plans which will help to reduce the Group's overall carbon footprint. A baseline measurement will be required to enable the Group to monitor progress against its reduction target, which has yet to be agreed.

Its delivery will be coordinated by the Isos Business Director who will regularly report on progress against the action plan. The strategy will be reviewed within a maximum of 3 years.

7.0 Action Plan

The three action plans will be produced in line with this strategy which will detail measures to be taken by Isos, in the short, medium and long-term, to help reduce the impact of the Groups activities on the environment.



**ISOS HOUSING GROUP
ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY**

APPROVAL PATH:

DATE AGREED BY BOARD STRATEGY GROUP:

DATE APPROVED BY ISOS BOARD: 22 APRIL 2009

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT: 1 MAY 2009

STRATEGY REVIEW DATE: APRIL 2012