



## **SUSTAINABILITY POLICY**

**Policy Classification: Strategic**

**Status: Approved**

<b>Policy Lead:</b>	Director of Property Assests
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## REFERENCE PAGE

<b>Document Title:</b>	Sustainability Policy
<b>Aim:</b>	
<b>Objective:</b>	Choose an item.
<b>Scope of Policy:</b>	Choose an item.
<b>Nominated Officer:</b>	
<b>Approval Source:</b>	Choose an item.
<b>Legal and Regulatory References:</b>	
<b>Procedural References:</b>	
<b>Consultation Completed:</b>	Choose an item.
<b>Risk Implications:</b>	Choose an item.
<b>Equalities Assessment:</b>	All Eildon policies and key documents are developed with the clear objective of ensuring that they do not discriminate against any person and have negative impacts for equality groups. We will always welcome comments on the impact of a policy on particular groups of people in respect of, but not limited to, age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion, sex or sexual orientation, being pregnant or on maternity leave and children's rights and wellbeing.
<b>Accessibility:</b>	Accessible electronically/online and in print. All documents can be translated and made available in audio, braille and large print versions upon request.



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## Aims & Objectives of the Sustainability Strategy

The Sustainability Strategy is a key part of Eildon’s Business Planning Framework and has relevance across all the activities of our business. The overall aim of the Sustainability Strategy is to provide a robust framework within which informed decisions can be made that ensure the long-term future of Eildon Housing Association and that the outcomes of the association’s activities remain positive for our customers and the wider community in which we operate.

Sustainable activity has been defined as, activity “which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (The Brundtland Commission).

For Eildon this means that our Sustainability Strategy has to incorporate all areas of our work, covering the organisational, social, environmental and economic facets of our activities. To achieve this, our Sustainability Strategy is linked directly to these key four elements and the action plan which flows from this strategy reflects the key objectives associated with these elements.

Finally, Eildon’s approach to sustainability is underpinned by our corporate values:

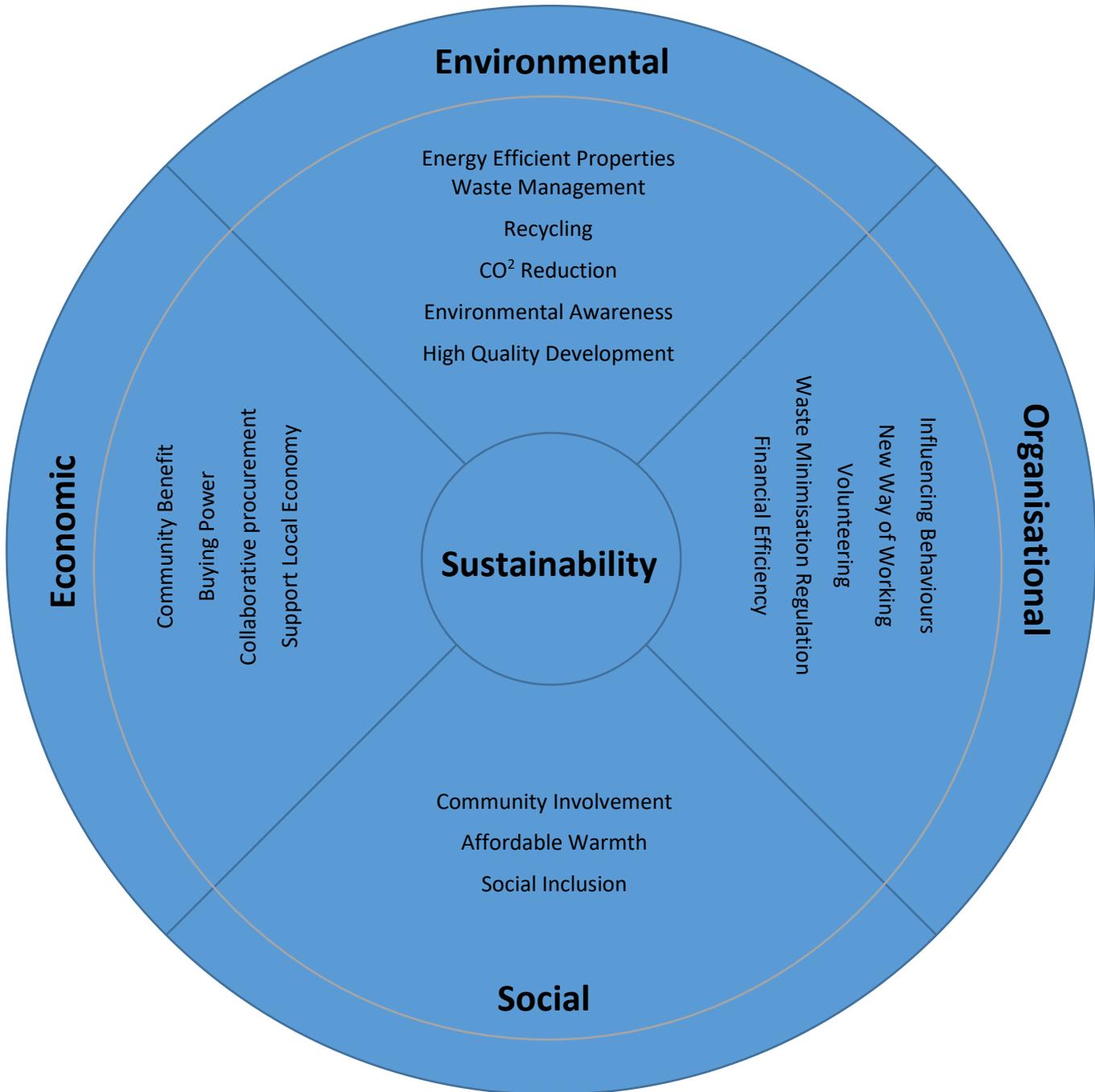
<b>Caring</b>	We care about what we do, the people we work with and the customers we serve
<b>Committed</b>	We work together to provide affordable, high quality homes, care and support services
<b>Connected</b>	We are part of the communities we serve and believe we can make a real difference
<b>Creative</b>	We are ready to meet the challenges of the future with enthusiasm and new ideas.

## Purpose of the Sustainability Strategy for Eildon HA

The core of our business is the provision and management of affordable housing allied to which is the provision of care and support to our housing customers and other members of the community. This strategy will set out how sustainability will underpin the activities of our housing management services, the development and maintenance of our built assets and of our care and support services. It will also set out how sustainability will inform our governance structures and the financial standards which we apply to our business.

Given the range of our activities, it is clear that as an organisation if we are to embrace and successfully embed sustainability into these core activities, issues of social, environmental, economic and organisational sustainability must be identified and tackled across all business areas. Outlined below is our key influencing factors in respect of each of these facets of sustainability.

**Key Influencing Factors**



Following on from identifying these facets of sustainability the purpose of this strategy is to ensure an explicit link between sustainability between the elements identified above and what we as an organisation do on the ground. Each facet of sustainability is set out as an individual strategic objective with specific actions and targets identified

## Strategic Objectives

### Strategic Objective No1 : *Environmental*

#### What we will achieve during the plan period:

- Expose our sustainability activities to external scrutiny
- We will identify our organisational carbon footprint and then take the appropriate steps to reduce this.
- Improve the energy efficiency of our homes
- Ensure our new homes meet the highest standard of energy efficiency that can be afforded
- Work with our contractor base to reduce waste and increase the use of recycled materials
- Improve the management of our asset base to ensure a greater focus on long term sustainable investment in our properties
- Introduce where possible renewable energy projects to our new and existing properties

#### Why this is important

As an operational business we have a carbon footprint and we should be able to identify the scale of that footprint in order that we can look meaningfully at reducing our damaging impact upon the environment.

A major component of our business is housing construction and its maintenance. These processes are significant consumers of resources which in turn contributes to the increases in co2 and climate change. As an organisation which is committed to sustainable development we want to work with our contractors to reduce resource consumption during the construction period. To that end we will seek to reduce waste and increase the use of recycled materials in our projects.

Given the resources taken to construct a property it is imperative that the property is sustainable in the long term. To achieve this we must ensure we build in sustainable communities, that once constructed we maintain our properties in the most efficient manner possible, with a focus on planned rather than reactive investment. Through the utilising of our asset management system we will plan, develop and maintain our properties with the objective of extracting the maximum utility from the resources employed.

## Key Priorities 2016 - 2019

- In 2016 we will accurately measure of organisational carbon footprint and commit to the continuous monitoring of our footprint in order to identify and implement the necessary actions required to reduce our adverse impact on the environment.
- Produce and implement a Carbon Management Plan for April 2017 which will be externally audited/accredited
- All new homes will be built to a minimum of silver standard as defined by the Scottish Building Standards.
- All our properties (where it is technically possible and viable) will achieve EESH by 2020
- All new build contracts will require contractors to incorporate a minimum 10% recycled content into new developments
- We will further develop our life cycle modelling tools to ensure appropriate investment in sustainable properties
- We will ensure that our ratio of planned investment to reactive repairs will consistently exceed 60:40%

## Strategic Objective No 2: *Organisational*

### What we will achieve during the plan period

- Ensure that the organisation has a clearly articulated strategy in place to support ongoing sustainability
- Become an exemplar within the Scottish Borders in the promotion of sustainable objectives
- Ensure that the organisation remains on a stable financial footing
- Continue to raise awareness in respect of financial management
- Maximise grant income to support investments
- Encourage the commitment of our staff to embed sustainable practices in all we do
- Promote new ideas and innovation to improve our approach to sustainability
- Identify and publicise the benefits of judicious management of corporate resources
- Embrace and utilise new ways of working
- Manage our assets in a sustainably efficient manner

## Why this is important

In order that we can deliver sustainable products and services we need a sustainable organisation. A key element of achieving that sustainability is strong, appropriate governance which will be achieved by an ongoing commitment to ensuring that Board member knowledge, training, recruitment, selection and procedures are of the highest quality.

In tandem with high quality governance our partnerships with other bodies including, statutory organisations, our customers and other relevant parties are crucial in terms of our sustainability. We will apply the same best practice principles to our partnership working as we do to our internal governance, in recognition of the wider public value that can be derived from positive collaborative relationships.

The financial resources available to Registered Social Landlords and other third sector/public bodies are increasingly constrained whilst demand for products and services are increasing. There is also a growing focus on all those in receipt of public funding to demonstrate value for that money. As an organisation which is in receipt of public funds we welcome the scrutiny associated with this, recognising our responsibility to act prudently whilst maximising the return on public investment in terms of delivering public good. As an organisation which is focussed upon sustainable development and the continuous improvement of our services we also recognise that meeting these objectives will require astute financial management in line with innovative cost saving practices.

Without the commitment of our staff to sustainability our ability to deliver on the promises we make to our customers, regulators and other stakeholders will be fatally undermined. Delivering that commitment will only be achieved through creating an environment in which sustainability is at the centre of everything we do. To achieve this we need to support individuals and groups through changing work practices, encourage innovation and new ideas in our approach to working in a more sustainable manner and expose our sustainability practices to external scrutiny.

Having a staff group committed to sustainability will also exhibit itself in the good stewardship of our corporate resources, exemplified through a concern to manage buildings, services and other resources efficiently whilst seeking out and adopting innovative practices to bolster future responsible resource consumption

## Key Priorities 2016-2019

- Continue to review, refine and improve Board member support through the use of appropriate appraisal mechanisms and training programmes.
- Ensure the effective use of financial resources through the application of investment appraisal framework
- Produce an annual asset management plan
- Produce regular and accurate financial plans
- Ensure robust annual budgeting
- Where of an appropriate scale, utilise community benefit clauses include community benefit, recycling and reuse clauses into contracts
- Always assess the feasibility of collaborative procurement to maximise financial and social benefits
- Ensure all corporate properties are constantly on the most efficient energy tariffs and identify mechanism's for transferring our estate to more sustainable energy sources, including in 2016 an assessment of including the Weaving Shed into a SHARK energy solution
- Continually expand and renew our Working Smarter initiative
- Implement fully our SharePoint content management system
- Develop mobile working
- Promote, Support and Develop the Eildon Makes a Difference Campaign
- Throughout 2016 evaluate existing mechanisms for customer engagement and implement identified improvements to tenant participation, tenant's scrutiny panel and customer focus groups to be in place by April 2017.
- Maintain commitment to participate on relevant partnership bodies including Community Planning Partnerships.
- Ensure the organisation maintains its representation on national representative bodies such as SFHA.

## Strategic Objective No 3: *Social*

### What we will undertake

- A rigorous approach to tackling anti-social behaviour
- Improve the attractiveness of our estates
- Provide or facilitate access to advice to enhance financial inclusion
- Support practical measures to sustain tenancies
- Assist local communities to improve local environments and infrastructure
- Deliver well designed services which meet communities requirements
- Support staff in their efforts to support other local voluntary organisations
- Increase the range of service available to customers of our handyperson service

## Why this is important

A key factor in our sustainability as a business will be our success in contributing to the creation and maintenance of sustainable communities in the localities in which we operate. Given that we have properties in almost 50 different settlements across the Scottish Borders a one size fits all approach will not engender sustainable communities. However a commitment to delivering excellent services, maximising the use of precious resources and ensuring that our customers have safe, affordable, well maintained and well managed homes, located in a safe well maintained environment is paramount in achieving sustainable communities. We will also support a range of additional advice, facilitating access to support in terms of energy efficiency and financial inclusion which can be critical in underpinning the sustainable tenancies upon which our sustainable business is built.

## Key Priorities 2016 – 2019

- Increase levels of tenancy sustainment to 88% of all tenants sustaining new tenancies for more than 12 months by April 2017
- Resolve 90% of anti-social behaviour case with the agreed timescales by April 2017
- Implement new estate action policy and develop estate action plans by end of 2016
- Modernise our means of service delivery through the introduction of mobile working and SharePoint by the end of 2016
- Raise staff awareness of energy efficiency and how to pass on benefits to customers
- Publicise and support the availability of additional advice and practical services aimed at sustaining tenancies.
- Utilise community benefit clauses to support social projects, including environmental enhancements in addition to the employment clauses
- Support communities to deliver, manage and sustain their own projects e.g. allotments
- Train our handyman team to undertake EPC's as a basis for engaging our handyman service customers to improve the energy efficiency of their homes
- Continue our engagement with Our Power, to deliver affordable energy to our customers.

## Strategic Objective No 4: *Economic*

### What we will undertake

- Promote ethical and collaborative procurement
- Use purchasing power to support local economy and enterprises
- Use our purchasing power to deliver community benefits
- We will work with individual's outwith the social rented sector to facilitate wider economic benefits through our intervention in the owner occupied and private rented sectors.

## Why this is important

Within the Scottish Borders, we are a significant direct employer and a significant purchaser of goods and services. Where it is feasible and does not disadvantage our customer base we will utilise our purchasing power to deliver benefits to the wider community. We will also work in a collaborative manner with other local organisations in order to maximise the community benefits we can lever from our procurement.

We will also ensure that projects are procured in a manner which does not restrict the ability of local SME's to deliver our requirements.

Whilst our primary function is and will remain the social rented sector we will work with owners and private landlords to support them access grants which will upgrade their properties or make them more energy efficient which will contribute to the driving up of housing quality and the wider energy efficiency agenda in the Scottish Borders

## Key Targets 2016-2019

- Ensure that all contracts in excess of £2m have community benefit clauses which commit to addition employment
- Where possible seek to combine our buying power with other likeminded organisations to enhance the opportunities for community benefits
- Support householders out with the social rented sector to access grants for energy efficiency measures such as the HEEPS:ABS programme
- Assess the viability of Shared Equity for older downsizers with a potential pilot identified at the Coopersknowe development
- Expand on a financially viable basis Handyperson service which will look to deliver some energy efficient measure to the homes of handyperson customers
- Continue to engage in FSR sub-group on procurement and community benefits

## Review

This policy should be reviewed within three years unless required earlier due to changes in the law, regulation, best practice or requirements of the Association.