

HEXAGON HOUSING ASSOCIATION

SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY

2017-2021

Hexagon

Version	<i>Sustainability Strategy V 1</i>
Prepared by	<i>Sustainability Action Group – author David Collick</i>
Approved by	<i>Director's Group</i>
Approved date	<i>DG in September 2017 - Board November 2017</i>
Date of previous review	<i>January 2014</i>
Document Owner	<i>Property Services Director</i>
Date of Next Review	<i>September 2021</i>
Location	

Introduction

Hexagon's mission is to **meet housing, care and support needs in South London and assist with economic and social regeneration.**

Our corporate plan sets out six objectives that guide our activities, one of which is;

“to be socially responsible in the way we run our business and, in particular, to focus our efforts on promoting environmental sustainability”.

Also within our corporate plan we state that;

Our commitment to environmental sustainability is reflected in our commitment to reduce carbon emissions in our existing properties, in the building of new homes and in our office.

Previous sustainability strategies set out a statement of intent regarding our commitment to meet these objectives. This strategy also adopts that commitment;

Hexagon is committed to achieving sustainability in all that we do; in our office premises, employment and business practices; in our core services of building new homes, maintaining our existing homes and providing services to residents and service users. We are committed to a holistic approach to sustainability which balances the achievement of social, environmental and economic benefits.

In 2014 & 2016 we achieved the prestigious national Gold award from Sustainable Homes via their SHIFT index. This puts Hexagon amongst a small number of top performers in this area across the housing association sector.

We will continue to deliver this by;-

- Minimising the harm that our business causes to the local and global environment;
- Maximising the quality of life for our residents and service users;
- Maintaining the financial viability of our business.

Strategic components

This strategy sets out 3 key areas where we will focus to deliver our objectives. Each of these is inter-dependent but also has an important part to play in its own right.

1. Properties
2. People
3. Partners

1. Properties

This includes the existing homes we provide, our new build programmes, offices and other buildings managed by Hexagon

Greening the stock:

This aspect of our sustainability strategy supports our Asset Management Strategy for our existing Property Portfolio, where we are focusing on the energy efficiency of our housing and minimising fuel poverty for our residents, called Greening the Stock. Using our SAP data we have measured the efficiency of our homes and identified those properties that need additional attention to improve their energy efficiency. As set out in the Asset Management Strategy we will be designing a strategy by March 2018 and programme to be delivered by 2021 which will tackle the poorest energy performing properties, those below 65 SAP, where viable to do so. This will improve efficiency levels to assist residents with fuel poverty and comfort in their homes. Where grants are available we will maximise these and also proactively seek opportunities of external funding and utilising new technologies to support this work.

Development – Building new homes:

Our objective is to build new homes to a minimum SAP rating of 85, have green transport plans within the design and other ecological values built into the development. We will aim to do this using designs and technologies which improve the quality of life for residents and can be easily maintained over the lifetime of the homes. Where possible we will create environments that allow biodiversity within our schemes that encourage nature to flourish with a variety of plant and animal life.

Offices:

We will continue to use and build upon the enthusiasm and commitment of everyone who works for Hexagon, including Board members, Directors, managers, front line and back office support staff to develop and encourage sustainability in our workplaces. We aim to measure and reduce the carbon and environmental footprint of our offices, supported homes and business travel. We will also apply sustainability principles to the products we purchase together with how we recycle and dispose of our waste. Our aim is to minimise the use of energy, water, paper and other consumables.

2. People

This includes our residents, visitors, staff and Board members

Residents

Residents have previously highlighted the following key priorities, within sustainability, that they feel are important:-

- Energy efficiency
- Water saving
- Keeping cool in summer
- Recycling
- Green transport
- Gardening/grow your own/ wildlife

These views together with the Residents Forum have been taken into account, and form part of our targeted improvements, information, change of behaviours and the impact of choice, in determining activities for individuals and properties.

Resident Involvement:

We will continue to provide user –friendly advice and assistance to our residents and service users on the choices they can make to improve the efficiency of their homes and lessen the impact on the environment. We will further enhance this activity by creating Resident Energy Champions who will be trained to assist us in this task. The aims will be to influence behaviours of residents to recycle more, use energy efficiently and save money.

Community involvement:

We will create a series of home energy improvements and train residents to be ambassadors in their communities to give others practical assistance on offer that will encourage all in the community to adopt a more energy conscious approach and therefore making a sustainable contribution going forward.

Staff & Board members:

We will encourage staff, and those who work at Hexagon, to minimise travel, wherever possible, or to consider alternatives, such as public transport, cycling to work and the like and ensure our policies reflect and encourage these opportunities.

We will also encourage and develop policies or practices to minimise waste and recycle more, saving energy, water, paper and other consumables.

3. Partners

These include our contractors, consultants, local authorities and energy related companies that deliver services or support Hexagon in our ambitions.

Contractors & Consultants:

We rely on private sector partners to deliver our programmes of building new homes and making improvements to existing homes, as well as our property maintenance service. We will continue working together to reduce the environmental impact of their operations, as well as using our purchasing opportunities to encourage other suppliers to adopt sustainable practices.

Re:New is the GLA's official partner looking at London wide opportunities for assisting in retrofitting projects across homes in the capital. Working to the Mayors Climate Change Mitigation and Energy Strategy, this partner is looking to broker funded opportunities to address hard to treat properties and other projects that will assist in meeting the 60% CO2 reduction targets on the 1990 level by 2025. We will develop our relationship with Re:New, particularly in our Greening the Stock objectives.

Local Authorities:

Each of the five key local authorities with whom we work (**Bexley, Croydon, Greenwich, Lewisham and Southwark**) have their own sustainability strategies for both environmental and community sustainability. We will keep updated on and, where possible, contribute to the development of these strategies and reflect these in our own plans.

Others:

We will actively seek out funding and technology opportunities that will give us an insight into new methods, products and techniques that will assist us in further viable enhancements to our new build or existing property portfolio. These specific projects will be undertaken in partnership with our supply chain and third party funding bodies.

We have continued to strengthen our relationship with **Sustainable Homes**, the body behind **SHIFT**, and are considered to be a key partner in their future activities. We will continue to play an active role in supporting this initiative and meeting their objectives whilst continuing to submit for their awards in recognition of the achievements made in Hexagon.

Independent benchmarking and assessment

Hexagon's subscription to SHIFT (Sustainable Homes Index for Tomorrow), the best practice group, will continue to benchmark us against nearly 100 other organisations, currently representing in excess of 3 million properties on four key areas of assessment criteria – 1. Strategy and management, 2. Offices, 3. Existing stock and 4. New build.

Each criterion is designed to identify areas for performance and improvements, where the final rating identifies the overall performance of each organisation. Hexagon received its first formal rating in January 2011, winning a Bronze award, the next assessment in 2013 resulted in a Silver award with the business achieving Gold awards in 2014 & 2016.

Conclusion

Hexagon has established a great track record and received awards for addressing some of the most challenging aspects of modern day life. Whilst the foundations have been well laid, we can still go further to ensure that every part of our business activities see this agenda as part of 'business as usual'.

By raising the profile of this strategy and embedding it in all 3 key areas identified, we will continue to move our actions and activities from a strategic target to one of company culture and personal pride.

The action plan contains specific objectives and measures, attached in Appendix 1, which will provide the targets, informed by our sustainability ambitions and SHIFT performance improvements, identified from the last review, taking into consideration our current position, constraints and associated strategies.

Hexagon's Board will continue to monitor progress in implementing this strategy and the associated action plan by requiring an annual progress report.

APPENDIX 1

Action plan - Objectives and Specific Measures.