

PARAGON HOUSING ASSOCIATION

POLICY:	SUSTAINABILITY
POLICY AREA:	FINANCE & INVESTMENT
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1. Introduction

Sustainability underpins the whole range of the Association's functions. We recognise that sustainability means that economic, environment and social wellbeing are interdependent and that the sustainability of our organisation is crucial to a stable and secure future for our stakeholders.

The Association's policy is influenced by the UK Government and the Scottish Government's commitment to sustainability.

Development & Investment Context

In a development and investment context it means that the environment needs to be protected and enhanced because a damaged environment will sooner or later hold back economic development and affect people's quality of life.

Community Context

In the community context, sustainable relates to places where people want to live and work, now and in the future. They meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents, are sensitive to their environment, and contribute to a high quality of life. They are safe and inclusive, well planned, built and run, and offer equality of opportunity and good services for all.

Organisation Context

In the organisation context, sustainability is about ensuring that the Association operates on sound and ethical principles and in an efficient manner

Sustainability will be applied across all functions of the organisation and the Association will ensure that policies and actions are underpinned by its commitment to sustainability.

The Sustainability Policy and objectives are clearly linked to the Association's broader corporate plans, policies and priorities set out in the Internal Management Plan (IMP). Many of the objectives and targets set out in this policy are challenging and will take longer than the period of the IMP action plan to achieve. However, the Association wishes to implement a clear and consistent sustainability policy which reflects national and local indicators.

2. Aims

The aims of the Sustainability Policy are:

- To ensure our development and investment activities are carried out in a sustainable manner in accordance with all regulations and good practice and promote national objectives
- To ensure our policies and actions promote and support sustainable communities
- To ensure that our organization is run in a sustainable, ethical and efficient manner

3. Objectives

Sustainability issues will be identified which are most significant in terms of the Association's activities and services over which it can be expected to exercise an appropriate level of control and influence.

Areas of significant environmental impact include the acquisition and development of land, the consumption of energy and water, the use of transport and materials, the production of waste, and impacts on the natural and built environment.

The following objectives have been set:

Sustainable Development & Investment

- To deliver our investment programme and work with others to ensure our tenants live in safe, decent homes in a safe, decent environment.
- To practice and promote energy and resource conservation.
- To ensure that all waste arising from contract work i.e. skip hire waste is segregated and recycled by our contractors wherever possible and that the legal requirements for all waste transactions are met.

- To strive to minimise the risk of pollutant disposal of water, land and air.
- To investigate all reasonable options for recycling initiatives.
- To deliver planned maintenance and improvement programme broadly in accordance with commitments made to tenants and to meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) by 2015.
- To increase the use “Secured by Design” features in appropriate regeneration projects to ensure that communities are safe places to live.
- To increase the use innovative techniques, where appropriate, to achieve sustainable objectives.

Sustainable Communities

- To improve tenancy sustainment by developing and implementing a Tenancy Sustainment Strategy
- To increase the active participation of local residents in the decision-making process to ensure that policies, investment decisions and wider role activities are informed by an understanding of local priorities and consideration of their broader impact on the community
- Promote access to services to ensure inclusion.

Organisational Factors

- To strive to ensure that all of our office waste is handled, stored and disposed of, as required, not only by legislation but as best practice.
- To work towards reducing the amount of waste produced, in terms of office, site and other wastes.
- To provide advice, training and guidance for residents, staff and Committee Members.
- To increase the use of utilise local enterprise and local products therefore contributing to the local economy and increasing local employment opportunities.
- To effectively manage allocations to ensure needs and aspirations of applicants are met, sustainable communities are maintained.
- To introduce a baseline Carbon Footprint for our operations with annual target setting aimed at improving performance.
- Making prudent decisions to ensure organizational stability while promoting growth.

Partnership Working

- To work in partnership with others to ensure that sustainable communities and environments are created and maintained.

4. Targets

Targets to meet the Association’s objectives are set out in the IMP action plan. All targets set shall be consistent with the sustainability policy and with each other and shall, wherever possible, are measurable.

When reviewing the objectives and targets to set within the sustainability policy, the following will be considered:

- Legal and other requirements.
- The relative significance of the sustainability aspects involved.
- The technological options and other resources available for meeting the objective.
- The organisation's wider strategic and operational requirements.
- The views of stakeholders.

The Association will seek to continuously improve performance over the longer period by reviewing and revising the targets set at regular intervals.

5. Consultation

As a landlord, the Association acknowledges its various roles within the wider social context. It recognises the need to consult with other residents and owners on issues that affect the local community.

The Association will not limit itself to using one method of consultation but will seek to use a variety of methods, for example, meetings, questionnaires, surveys, suggestion schemes, discussions with tenants' organisations and day-to-day contact with service users

Investment decisions and wider role activities will be informed by an understanding of local priorities and consideration of their broader impact on the community. The actions to meet the sustainability objectives will be influenced and implemented using the feedback obtained.

6. Resources

The Association is committed to identifying, providing and maintaining the facilities needed to achieve its sustainability policy and objectives and targets and maintain legal compliance.

It shall determine and provide, in a timely manner, the resources needed:

- a. To implement the sustainability management system and achieve continual improvements in performance, and
- b. To address stakeholder satisfaction.

7. Training

The Association is committed to ensuring all members of staff, its governing body and residents have an appropriate level of understanding of the organizational commitment to the principles of the Sustainability Policy and the actions and change programmes that flow from it.

8. Equality

The Association operates an Equal Opportunities Policy which applies to all aspects of the Association's work to ensure fair and non discriminatory practice.

9. Monitoring

The sustainable objectives will be monitored through the Internal Management Plan which sets out the Association's targets and the actions.

The Housing Management and Investment Sub Committee will note the progress of the sustainability objectives when monitoring the Internal Management Plan.

10. Appeals and Complaints

Appeals and complaints against our operations with environmental or sustainability implications will be processed through the complaints procedures. Should the complainant still feel aggrieved it may be possible to refer the matter to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman.

11. Review

This policy will be reviewed at least every five years or earlier if legislation changes.