



Sustainability Policy

Policy Valid From	July 2018
Last Review date	July 2018
Next Review Date	July 2021



Creating thriving rural communities
www.berwickshirehousing.org.uk

Berwickshire Housing Association is a Registered Society. Registration No.: SP2482RS
Scottish Charity No.: SC042342 Registered Office: 55 Newtown Street, Duns, TD11 3AU

Sustainability Policy

1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline Berwickshire Housing Association's approach to sustainability and to make a positive contribution to the quality of life in the areas in which we operate.

The Scottish Government has set targets to achieve a reduction in carbon emissions by 42% by 2020 and an 80% reduction by 2050, compared to 1990 levels. It is important that we continue to provide high quality services whilst using sustainable methods to reduce our carbon footprint.

The objectives of this policy are to:

- Outline to staff their role in helping BHA become a sustainable organisation.
- Encourage staff to consider non-traditional ways of working which value the environment.
- Assist in the reduction of BHA's carbon footprint.
- Educate and inform our tenants about ways to live more sustainably in their home.

2 BHA's Sustainability Vision

This policy describes how we will integrate sustainability into our day to day activities as well as our longer term planning so that we contribute to meeting the long term needs of our tenants and communities within Berwickshire.

We are committed to reducing our impact on the environment through a reduction in our carbon footprint, increased recycling and working with our contractors who are committed to sustainable procurement chains. We aim to reduce our energy usage and we will, wherever possible, encourage green travel options within our organisation.

In all our activities we will adopt an approach that:

- recognises the role of social and environmental issues in enhancing the delivery of services
- seeking to develop our reputation in this area
- improve our knowledge and understanding of sustainability issues
- increase operational efficiency and
- contribute to meeting the current and future needs of tenants.

3 The importance of Sustainability

Sustainability has been adopted within the environmental community and covers all areas including recycling, reducing carbon emissions and sourcing new types of renewable energy. Specifically for BHA it relates to environmental issues such as:

- the type of materials used in new developments and in routine and planned maintenance
- the transport methods chosen by staff and
- BHA's general office working practices and recycling.

Sustainability is important because we have a duty as an organisation to reduce our carbon footprint by adopting sustainable methods of working. We will therefore look to use the "green alternative" wherever appropriate.

4 Property Development

Both in new-build and refurbishment developments we will seek to integrate sustainability measures at all stages of the process, including decisions on:

- The location, mix and function of the project
- The layout, design and specification
- The integration of external space
- The most effective form of procurement
- Construction methods
- Material specification
- Energy sources and energy efficiency
- The future use and maintenance of the buildings
- Waste management and site management

In the wider sense, we will seek to contribute to sustainable developments and sustainable communities by:

- Providing homes that people want to live in, both now and in the future
- Providing an appropriate environment for tenants to live in
- Creating living environments which are healthy, safe and secure
- Supporting tenants to engage with their local community and environment
- Creating social cohesion – recognising the needs of everyone

5 Property Maintenance and modernisation

In delivering our planned, cyclical and reactive maintenance services we will seek to:

- Maximise the life cycle of components through a high quality specification at initial installation.
- Maximise the life of components through repair rather than replacement, where this is feasible and compatible with tenants' expectations and other requirements.
- Regular review standard specifications having regard to the environmental impact of individual products and materials, such as heating boilers, paint, timber etc.
- Review procurement practices to maximise local sourcing of materials and the reduction of transport (energy) costs, where this is compatible with other objectives
- Implement energy efficiency measures (e.g. loft insulation and controls) and the installation of cost effective energy generation that contribute both to a sustainable environment and the reduction in individual tenant's heating costs.
- Seek to influence the sustainability practices of the contractors we use, where appropriate including sustainability targets in contract conditions.

6. Housing Management Services

Our approach to sustainability includes seeking to support tenants in maintaining their tenancies and addressing social and economic issues that impact on our tenants.

In addition to the action we will take under the development and maintenance headings above, we will:

- Work in conjunction with local partners, funding agencies and other relevant organisations to improve the social and economic well-being of those we house in our communities
- Seek to develop tenant involvement through our tenant participation strategy and any tenant engagement with staff
- Through tenant newsletters, social media, our website and any other communication methods we will:
- Provide tenants with appropriate energy advice, or direct them to agencies to assist them enabling them to reduce their energy costs and create healthy, internal environments;

- Provide tenants with information about how they can play their part in addressing environmental issues;
- Encourage tenants to maximise their use of local recycling facilities.
- Through our housing services policies and procedures, in particular when dealing with the issues arising from rent arrears and anti-social behaviour, we will seek to assist tenants to sustain their tenancies wherever possible.

7 Workplace

BHA will seek to maximise sustainability measures in our offices and other workplaces through:

- Reducing waste
- Reducing energy consumption
- Maximising recycling opportunities

8 Staff awareness and Involvement

BHA aim to be proactive in raising awareness amongst our staff about sustainability issues and the practical contribution they can make to sustainable development. We encourage staff to share knowledge of best practice.

We will encourage staff to be involved in developing corporate social responsibility across the organisation, with a commitment by senior management to 'lead by example' both in their own practices and in developing a long term environmental strategy.

9 Procurement

Where appropriate, we will ensure that our suppliers prioritise environmental practice. As part of our policy we will work with key suppliers to improve their overall environmental performance, encouraging them to reduce the adverse environmental impact of their products and processes.

When making purchasing decisions we will consider environmentally friendly choices, i.e. those products with a low adverse environmental impact.

10 Implementation and Review

The Leadership Team is responsible for ensuring that this policy is implemented throughout the organisation.

The Leadership Team and Management Team are responsible for establishing priorities and developing an Action Plan to implement the principles outlined in this policy. The Leadership Team will also be responsible for ensuring that the priorities and Action Plan are reviewed and updated annually as part of drafting the Annual Business Plan.

The Operations and/or Property Director will ensure that this policy is reviewed by the Board at least every three years.