



CARE HOUSING ASSOCIATION ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

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1. Policy Statement

Being sustainable and environmentally friendly is important to Care Housing Association (Care). In particular, we are committed to reducing waste, saving energy, using green materials and energy sources, making our homes energy efficient, educating our staff, tenants and partners, and reducing negative environmental impact across our operations, the homes that we let and our offices.

We recognise that climate change and extreme weather events, such as floods and heat waves, are a potential risk to our homes, our tenants and our operations. We also recognise that more sustainable homes mean lower tenant utility bills, lower emissions and better lifestyles.

This policy relates to Care's assets, works employees and resources.

2. Care's Environmental Commitments:

- To, where possible, invest in the energy efficiency of our existing stock with the aim to provide properties with a minimum Energy Rating of "C" in line with the Government's Decarbonisation Strategy.
- To support our tenants to have a home that is healthy and warm.
- To work with partners to promote and incorporate sustainability and energy efficiency, where possible, with new properties, developments and building design.
- To procure, where possible, sustainable products, materials and contractor services.
- Promoting and working with our contractors and suppliers to ensure sustainability is considered in their business activities.
- To minimise the amount of waste we produce and facilitate recycling across our properties and offices.
- To encourage employees, support staff and tenants to reduce energy emissions through education on energy-saving practices and choosing sustainable sources/suppliers.
- To minimise employee car travel by promoting sustainable transport options, facilitating working from home and online meetings where appropriate.

- To promote a positive environmental culture to all employees, tenants and partners through available media resources.

3. Asset management

In our homes we have some control over the type and efficiency of components such as the type of heating systems, the energy efficiency of the properties, the sustainability of the components and materials specified for new build and replacement works. By investing in improvements to these items we also help to reduce our tenants' energy bills and hopefully encourage a warm and healthy home in colder months.

Our focus is to develop better than minimum standard energy efficient homes to help meet the demand and to, where economically possible, improve the homes with poor energy performance and to deliver quality replacement programmes.

4. Sustainability

Care will develop and regularly review specifications for the development of new/refurbished properties, as well as specifications for the planned replacement of building components, appliances, furniture and fittings to ensure that they are produced and sourced sustainably and, where possible, contribute to the Government's Carbon Zero targets.

Where Care has an influence on the specification of new developments, we will endeavour to ensure that:

- The carbon used in the production of the components, in the construction and the ongoing use of the home is considered and, where possible, reduced.
- The development is sympathetic and fits in with the environment.
- The development promotes community and wellbeing.
- The site has good connectivity both physically and electronically.
- The development has the strongest possible "green" credentials.

Care aims to establish, develop and maintain sustainable relationships with businesses that understand our aims, objectives and values. Contractors and suppliers will also need to contribute to the ongoing goal of developing, managing and maintaining sustainable homes.

Where possible our contractors and suppliers will be locally based, small or medium sized enterprises that have a more flexible approach to work, similar values to Care and are open to new ideas and methods of working. The contractors that we work with should have a stable economic foundation.

Ideally contractors will be committed to inclusivity, offering employees opportunities for growth and training, operate an apprenticeship scheme, offer no less than the real living wage, as defined by the Living Wage Foundation, and foster a good work/life balance.

5. Promotion

This policy will be communicated to all persons working for and on behalf of the Association and will be made available to the public via Care's website.

Care aims to share relevant 'eco tips' with tenants and their support teams regularly via website posts, our e-newsletter or specific communications to a household and we will proactively support relevant theme days throughout the year e.g. Earth Day to help raise awareness of and show our support for environmental issues and causes.

6. Equality and Diversity

Care are committed to respecting diversity in all aspects of our work and we will not tolerate any form of discrimination.

We recognise that there is the potential for impact across the characteristics of Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex or Sexual Orientation.

Where we are made aware of or identify customers with specific needs, we will be proactive in targeting our communication and support appropriately and consider any specific needs individually.

7. Responsibility, Commitment and Review

The designated officer responsible for implementation and monitoring of this policy will be the Chief Executive. Care will formally review this policy every three years or as necessary dependant on best practice guidelines and legislative changes.

APPENDIX 1 – Environmental considerations for Care’s staff**Driving:**

- Have you grouped together visits/meetings that make sense geographically to save on mileage (and time)?
- When arranging a meeting, consider if it is necessary to travel, or could the meeting take place either over the phone or via video conferencing? Could anyone car-share to the meeting?
- If you’re going out or home for lunch can you walk rather than drive or can multiple people go in one car if further away?
- Did you know the more energy efficient your car is, the more you will earn from mileage expenses? This is because fuel is compensated per mile so if your car uses less fuel per mile you can make a saving.
- Care has a salary sacrifice scheme for employees to lease electric cars

Recycling:

- Can we repair or repurpose something rather than replace it e.g. phone or laptop with a fault? Or donate/sell unused items for re-use elsewhere
- Are we recycling everything we can in the office? This includes rubbish, printer cartridges, furniture etc. and reusing banners, Christmas decorations etc.
- Have properties got provision to recycle standard kerbside items e.g. bins free or provided?
- Can old furniture in properties be donated/recycled?

Resources:

- When printing a document, consider if it is necessary. Are you able to work with the document on your screen rather than printing it off for reference? Could you just print off the pages you need rather than the full document? Print 2-sided to save paper.
- Once you’re finished with a printed document consider if anyone else may wish to use it or if you could use blank sides for notes
- Are you using unnecessary energy in the office e.g. excess heating, lighting, boiling more water than you need etc? Have you turned off sockets when not in use, especially before you leave for a meeting or at the end of the day?
- Consider % renewable energy when selecting a supplier for void/office premises
- Do you have time to delete some old/sent emails or could we set a timeframe after which they are automatically deleted? (storage uses energy)
- Could you make ‘ecosia’ your default search engine on work devices? (They use profits to plant trees)