

1 Introduction and Context

The world we live has been continually threatened by global climate change and depletion of natural resources as a direct result of human activity since the industrial revolution. There is no doubt climate change is here and threatening human life, wildlife and the environment.

We support over 6,500 households, up to 25,000 people, each other in the workplace and our own families. As an adopter of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals we have a duty of care as custodians of this world and the environment that we all share.

As Government strives to reduce carbon emissions and achieve zero carbon by 2050, we recognise the role that we, as a housing provider, can and will take to tackle issues that damage our environment and protect customers from the trap of fuel poverty.

Government will implement regulations to reduce carbon emissions following consultation on the Future Homes Standard (2020) and call upon previous regulation (Fuel Poverty Regulation 2014) to ensure housing providers play their role.

Rooftop as a forward thinking and energetic organisation will respond and ensure it creates great homes and places for our communities.

2 Vision and Values / Objectives

At Rooftop, our vision is 'We build great homes and support successful lives by being a better business'. Our values are at the heart of our culture. They describe the behaviours we expect in our leaders, managers, and employees in their interaction with customers, colleagues and stakeholders.



WE WORK TOGETHER

- We talk
- We listen
- We network



WE MAKE THINGS BETTER

- We solve
- We learn
- We evolve



WE DO THE RIGHT THING

- We own
- We support
- We act

Underpinning all the above is our commitment to environmental sustainability.

3 Aims and Objectives

Who this strategy applies to?

The RHG Environmental Sustainability Strategy applies to staff, the Board and partners working with the Group with the aim of creating great places in which people want to live and thrive and that are environmentally sustainable, reduce carbon emissions and respond to the growing concerns of fuel and power poverty.

Strategy purpose

What we do now will have a significant bearing on the future we leave our children and their children. Embedding sustainable practices in all that we do will result in a positive impact on our climate and on the communities we serve.

Our approach to sustainability will demonstrate benefits to residents and the business against affordable warmth, combating climate change and delivering Value for Money through efficiency and better use of resources.

Our commitment to environmental sustainability will ensure we build high quality, affordable homes, as well as maintaining and improving existing homes to the highest standards. This is driven by our own Rooftop Living Home Standard (RLHS).

Occasionally some of our existing stock will not meet the RLHS. These homes will be subject to an economic and social options appraisal that will consider the options of potential disposal and alternative use. The definition of disposals will be detailed within the Asset Management Strategy to ensure Value for Money and a positive social and financial return.

This commitment goes beyond homes, we recognise the importance ecology and biodiversity plays in creating great places.

We will ensure that we embrace best practice and make the best use of natural resources in running our business; this includes transport, materials, waste, and energy.

What we will do

At the heart of the Environmental Sustainability Strategy is the Group Board, accountable for the work we do. The Board has delegated responsibility for implementing and embedding this strategy to the Environmental Sustainability Panel (ESP), a panel consisting of a Board Member and Staff.

The Group's financial commitment to environmental sustainability and its' objectives are built into the annual budget.

ESP is charged with achieving key objectives annually. We will measure all our activities for value for money, social and environmental impact. The pillars of our strategy are.

Energy Efficiency – We will build to the RLHS and provide energy efficient homes to the highest economically viable solution ensuring a fabric first approach, incorporating Modern Methods of Construction and off site manufacturing to achieve zero carbon homes by 2025.

By March 2030 we will achieve a minimum Standard Assessment Protocol (SAP) score of 75, mid Band C across all existing homes to reduce energy consumption and bills. Through our Asset Management Strategy we will target households suffering fuel poverty and our worst performing assets, as a priority.

By March 2030 we will achieve an average SAP Band B across all Rooftop stock.

Energy Generation – Through the innovative use of building and land holding assets we will research and implement measures to generate our own electricity for the benefit of the business, our residents and local communities.

Sustainable Travel – We will aim to reduce the carbon footprint generated by the travel required within the business in carrying out its daily work. We will promote car sharing, cycling, use of public transport and the use of low or no emission transport.

We will build upon the lessons learnt during the COVID-19 pandemic to exploit agile working as a tool to improve colleagues wellbeing, efficiency and carbon footprint in the workplace.

Waste Management and resources – We will adopt a zero tolerance in our business premises to single use plastics and reduce general waste through better use of information technology, online services and remote working.

We will ensure that construction partners adopt the Considerate Constructors Code of Practice and encourage all service contractors to operate in line with the principles of ISO14001.

Ecology and the living environment – We will safeguard the environment and engage with customers, strategic partners, schools, and the community to promote and improve biodiversity, support education and encourage better use of land to encourage sustainable living.

Best Practice – We will sustain ISO14001 accreditation to ensure that we meet our legal and regulatory responsibilities and we will be an active member of the West Midlands Sustainable Housing Action Partnership (SHAP). We will ensure we engage with our staff to embrace their ideas and aspirations to make Rooftop the regional number one community-based provider of excellent homes, services and custodian of the environment.

We will promote the work of Rooftop externally and we will support local initiatives that promote environmental issues and best practice with our strategic partners.

Rooftop will achieve a 20% reduction in its overall carbon footprint by 2025.

4 Skills, training, and employment

“The average housing association home is significantly more energy efficient than the average home across England. With an average Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) rating of 66, the typical housing association home lies more than seven SAP points above owner occupied and private rented stock. Housing association stock is also slightly more energy efficient than local authority stock.” (*NHF Taking stock - Understanding the quality and energy efficiency of housing association homes January 2020, pg. 5*)

The social housing sector is about to launch a collective approach that will see its 2.25 million homes achieve an average SAP Band C by 2030. With an estimated cost per home of £5,000 this equates to a sector wide industry valued at £11 billion.

Working with key strategic partners, for example Matrix, Platform Property Care and Local Authorities, we will explore the potential to combine our collective force through training, employment and service contracts that support the green economy and deliver social value through the funds that the sector will invest.

5 Funding

Access to funding both from within Rooftop and through external sources is essential if we are to deliver our targets.

We will seek to maximise access to external funding sources and in particular government grants from the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategies and local strategic partners.

We will set annual fundraising targets to support a ring fenced “Existing Homes Sustainability Fund” that forms part of our investment programmes.

6 Customer Engagement - The Customer Voice.

We will consult with residents on matters that affect them and their living environment. We will offer choice and influence over what we do in their homes. We will provide guidance and support to ensure that customers receive the maximum benefits from the work that we will do.

7 Action Plan

The Board review of the Group's annual Corporate Plan sets objectives to be implemented by ESP through its action plan.

The action plan is a readily available document and will be promoted across the Group and with stakeholders annually.

8 Reporting, promoting and achievements

The ESP will report annually to the Board on its achievements and progress against the agreed action plan.

We will adopt Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) reporting criteria to inform those who invest in Rooftop and regard us as a strategic partner of the work we do and the impact we make.

9 Review

This Strategy will be reviewed every five years unless there are major changes in legislation or good practice.

10 Appendix – Action Plan