



Sustainability Policy



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Executive Summary

Introduction

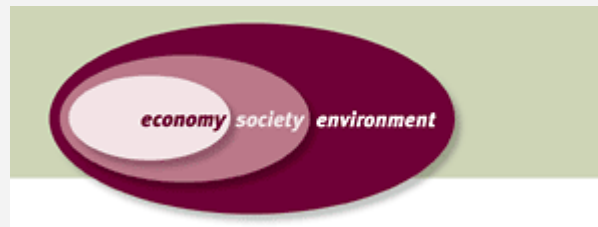
The Ardenglen Group ('the Group'), comprising Ardenglen Housing Association as the parent and Ardenglen Developments as a subsidiary, is committed to the highest standards of openness, probity and accountability.

Regulatory Standard 5 states that an RSL must "*conduct its affairs with honesty and integrity*". To ensure this, the Group has clear policy and procedures in place which make sure the organisation acts with transparency, honesty and propriety and avoids any public perception of improper conduct.

What is Sustainable Development?

Sustainable development is about people: "**doing right by people today without trashing people's prospects for tomorrow**"

Sustainable Development is basically a simple idea of great importance to us all. We must achieve a balance between economic, social and environmental objectives and priorities.



The 3 nested spheres of sustainability - interdependent and interconnected.

Core Values

Sustainable development has four core values:-

- **Engagement:** People should be able to contribute to decisions that affect their quality of life, and their environment.
- **Equity:** Resources should be used to provide for the needs of the whole community without exclusion or disadvantage to any group.
- **Environmental Protection:** We all depend on the Earth's natural resources to live. These resources should be protected and enhanced.
- **Economic Development:** We all depend on a strong, broadly based local economy. This should be developed in partnership to provide opportunities for the whole community

Aims and Objectives

The Association will embrace the social and environmental agenda of sustainability through addressing 8 Key Themes:

Land

Make the best use of available land by developing housing which will remain in high demand through the use of quality design and engagement with the local community.

Buildings

Ensure buildings are accessible, durable and adaptable, will minimise environmental impact and benefit the health and wellbeing of residents.

Society

Working together with the community and other partners to ensure Ardenglen is a healthy safe place for people to live, work and play.

Energy

Develop low energy design, concentrating on the use of renewable energy sources and reducing CO2 emissions.

Waste

Reducing all forms of pollution and domestic, office and construction waste.

Water

Conserve water and ensure efficient sewage and storm water collection

Landscape

Enhance the local landscape and ecology and provide high quality open space for amenity and recreational use.

Travel

Reduce the need to travel, support alternatives to car use and reduce the environmental impact of cars.

Conclusion

The Associations Sustainability Policy aims to support the 1992 Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit strategy of “think global, act local” recognising that sustainable development is a process that occurs and is largely experienced at a local rather than a national level.

The Policy also recognises that sustainable development has a social and economic dimension in addition to the protection of the environment and the prudent use of natural resources.

Action Plan

We have developed a 3 Year Action Plan, which identifies targets against the 8 Key Themes outlined in the Policy

Progress against the Action Plan targets will be reported to the Board and the local community on a regular basis.

Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....	2
Table of Contents	4
Introduction	5
Land.....	7
Buildings	8
Society	10
Energy	12
Waste.....	13
Water	14
Landscapes	15
Travel.....	16
Conclusion.....	17
Appendix 1 - Action Plans	18

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Introduction

What is sustainable housing development and regeneration?

Sustainable housing simply means providing and managing housing in ways that will ensure a better quality of life for everyone, now and for the generations to come. One common definition of sustainable development is "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".

How we renew, develop and manage our homes affects important issues such as transport, health, employment and community. The development of the built environment plays a considerable part in achieving the objectives of sustainable development, namely:

- reducing greenhouse gas emissions;
- reducing pollution;
- conserving resources;
- preserving biodiversity;
- fostering cohesive, inclusive communities; and
- a healthy economy.

Why is it important?

How we plan and occupy buildings and houses in particular, has a significant effect on society and the environment.

- 10% of carbon dioxide emissions in the UK arise from the production and transportation of building materials and the construction of buildings.
- The construction industry generates more controlled waste (municipal, industrial and commercial, and construction and demolition) than any other sector in Britain - one third of the total solid waste.
- Energy consumption in the domestic sector accounts for 40% of the total energy used in the UK.
- The quality, price and availability of housing are crucially important to individuals' quality of life.
- The location, planning, layout, design and management of houses contribute to community spirit and identity.

Concern about the effect of development on the environment has been growing over the last 20 years and is now an important issue in society. The global, national and local political agenda has begun to respond, and sustainable development principles are incorporated into much guidance and legislation.

The Background

In 1992, nearly 180 countries met at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro to discuss how to achieve sustainable development. They agreed a plan of action, "Agenda 21", and recommended that all countries should produce national sustainable development strategies.

Agenda 21 suggested a strategy of "think global, act local", recognising that sustainable development is a process that occurs and is largely experienced at a local rather than a national level.

A follow-up summit was held in Kyoto in 1997 which agreed to global targets for a reduction in

carbon dioxide emissions, including a target for the UK to cut emissions by 20% by 2010.

In September 2002 over 100 world leaders and thousands of delegates gathered in Johannesburg to review progress since the 1992 Earth Summit and to set an agenda for the next 10 years.

Government's National Strategy for Sustainable Development

A Better Quality of Life, a strategy for sustainable development in the UK was published in 1999. This recognised that sustainable development has a social and economic dimension in addition to protection of the environment and the prudent use of natural resources.

The national strategy set out four key objectives that must be achieved simultaneously:

- Social progress that meets the needs of everyone
- Effective protection of the environment
- Prudent use of natural resources
- Maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment

The Government has sought the integration of sustainable development at all levels of policy and administration. Government departments, regional development agencies, local authorities, government agencies and others are expected to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development in the UK within the national strategy.

Why housing is important to achieving sustainable development

There are many important factors including:

- Housing is a basic human need - its quality, cost and availability are crucial to individuals' quality of life.
- Well-designed and maintained housing will help support a sense of community just as run-down housing will tend to erode it.
- The location, planning, layout and design of housing make an important contribution to community spirit and identity, which are significant components of the social dimension of sustainable development.
- The interrelationship between housing, health and well-being, educational access and attainment, and access to employment has all been well documented.
- The position of houses, the materials which they are made of, the uses their occupants make of such resources as energy and water, and the availability of public transport/alternative forms of transport all have major environmental implications.
- Many housing association residents suffer from social exclusion and can be benefit dependent. They are a key target group for many of government policies including social inclusion, eliminating child poverty, decent homes, employment generation, addressing fuel poverty, health and education improvement.
- 70 of the 147 national sustainable development indicators, and many of the regional and local indicators, can be linked to housing and community issues.
- With nearly 2 million homes already, and continued significant projected growth through building and stock transfer, housing associations have a major role to play in helping achieve a sustainable future.

Land

Use of Previously Developed Land

A sequential approach to the development of sites should be adopted. Greenfield sites and previously undeveloped land should only be developed when the stock of available brownfield land has been exhausted in the local area

Location

- **Demand:** Developments will take place in areas where residents will wish to live, both now and in the future. In the case of redevelopments and refurbishment, the aim will be to enhance and improve the locality so that residents will wish to remain in the area
- **Access to Amenities:** Key services and facilities should be easily accessible by foot and/ or public transport for the convenience of all residents and to reduce the use of the car
- **Reputation:** In the cases of areas with an already adverse reputation, developments should aim to improve the reputation of the area and make it a more desirable place to live, with the aim of ensuring that any investment in the housing has a long term future.
- **Quality of Existing Environment:** Developments should improve and enhance the quality of the existing environment (buildings, their surroundings and the standard of maintenance), making it a more desirable place to live.
- **Quality of Existing Housing:** Developments should improve and enhance the quality, design and layout of housing refurbishment and provide high standards in the quality, design and layout of new housing.

Land Use

- **Mixed Use of Buildings:** Developments should enhance the existing mix of uses in a neighbourhood so that people can live, work, shop and enjoy leisure time in the local area.
- **Complementary Land Uses:** Consider using available land for complementary activities which may make a development more self sustaining. These might include allotments, woodland, wildlife areas or renewable energy generation. Such uses should be balanced with the gross density achievable for the scheme.

Urban Design

Developments should incorporate good urban design principles and the public spaces between buildings should be carefully designed.

Density

Developments should be at a density appropriate to site location with highest densities around town centres and public transport nodes and lowest densities to outer edges of settlements and in rural locations.

Buildings

Adaptability

Buildings should be capable of being adapted and improved easily to meet changing needs and expectations

Durability

Dwellings should be designed and constructed to have a long useful life and to minimize maintenance.

Accessibility

All dwellings should be accessible to everyone including people with disabilities.

Low Environmental Impact

- **Ozone Depletion:** Insulation materials which minimize Ozone Depletion.
- **Timber Specification:** Where timber and timber products are specified they should be from recognised sustainable managed sources or be re-used or recycled timber.
- **Material Specification:** The building materials used should reduce environmental impacts as far as possible.
- **Low Pollution Boilers:** Boilers which minimize the emission of polluting products of combustion should be specified.

Re-use and Recyclability

If the site has existing buildings, where possible, they should be re-used, or if demolition is unavoidable, re-use or recycle the demolition materials. Buildings should be designed and constructed so that the materials can be easily re-used or re-cycled on demolition.

Health and Wellbeing

- **Thermal Comfort:** Dwellings should be designed to provide a comfortable internal environment at an affordable cost. Provide a level of controlled ventilation which will control humidity and odours without causing discomfort from draughts or imposing an excessive heating load.
- **Light:** Buildings should be designed to have adequate levels of day lighting for resident's well being as well as for energy efficiency.
- **Indoor Air Quality:** Avoid materials and products which may expose people to substances to which we are not adapted and which have only recently become part of our environment and which may be toxins, mutagens, carcinogens, pathogens and allergens.
- **Electromagnetic Fields:** Adopt a precautionary position with regard to the potential adverse effects of electro-magnetic fields on health inside the dwelling will be adopted.

Procurement

- **Consultant and Contractor Selection:** The selection process for consultants and contractors should ensure that those selected have an awareness of environmental issues and expertise in sustainable construction.
- **Contractual Relationships:** A form of contractual arrangement that encourages all stakeholders to act in partnership towards, amongst other things, a sustainable development process will be adopted

Asset Management

Develop an asset management strategy to optimise the use of assets and so improve homes and services for residents.

Society

Social Exclusion and Poverty

In the cases of areas with significant levels of social exclusion and poverty, strategies should be devised to tackle these factors, dealing with the inter-related problems of unemployment, crime, poor health, housing, education and degraded local surroundings.

Social Cohesion

In the cases of neighbourhoods which lack a sense of community, developments should aim to improve the levels of mutual support and interaction between residents, with the aim of making it a more desirable place to live.

Community Involvement

Developments should have an active public participation strategy to enable end users or their representatives to take an important role in the decision making process.

Mix

- **Mix of Tenure:** Developments should encourage and enhance a mixed and balanced community with diverse forms of tenure and diverse forms of households and types of people.
- **Mix of Community:** Aim for a balance between encouraging a community to be mutually supportive and well integrated, and meeting the often conflicting needs of community members. Aim to meet the needs of older people, teenagers and young families both singly and collectively.
- **Mix of Property Type and Size:** Developments should have a mix of unit types and sizes, including units designed specifically for people with disabilities or special needs, appropriate to the site location and the local housing need.

Crime

Developments should minimise opportunities for crime and anti social behaviour by the design and layout of the physical environment, and aim to reduce the fear of crime amongst residents.

Environmental Awareness

Environmental awareness amongst management and maintenance staff, and existing and potential residents to be increased.

Local Economy

Local enterprise and local products should be encouraged and utilised, therefore contributing to the local economy and increasing local employment opportunities.

Regeneration

To develop integrated regeneration solutions which address environmental, social and economic inequalities simultaneously.

Housing Management

- To ensure that residents can exercise influence over their communities.
- To ensure that the tenant and landlord can sustain the terms of the tenancy.
- To ensure that services meet tenants' expectations now and in the future.
- To ensure that vulnerable tenants are identified and supported.

Energy

Low Energy Design

- **Policy, Standards and Strategy:** Developments should maximise opportunities for energy conservation with the aim of reducing carbon dioxide emissions.
- **Site Layout:** Developments should maximise opportunities for passive solar gain through orientation and minimise wind chill by careful siting and/ or the inclusion of wind breaks.
- **House Planning:** Developments should aim to maximise energy conservation by using energy efficient building forms and internal layouts.
- **Systems:** The heating and ventilating systems, hot water systems and all equipment installed in buildings should be as energy efficient as possible.

Renewable Energy

Energy from renewable sources, the sun or wind for example, should be used in preference to energy from non-renewable sources such as oil and gas.

Carbon Offset

The provision of carbon offset or storage should be considered in the form of forests, which absorb carbon dioxide when they are growing, equivalent to the amount of carbon dioxide emitted by the use of energy in a building

Waste

Pollution

- **Noise:** Developments should be sited away from sources of noise which are likely to be detrimental to residents health and well being and/ or methods for mitigating the effects of noise pollution should be incorporated
- **Water:** Developments should be sited away from flood risk areas and polluted waterways.
- **Air:** Developments should be sited away from areas of high air pollution.
- **Land Contamination:** Potential detrimental effects of land contamination on residents' health should be eliminated. Any land contamination treatment should be of as low an environmental impact as possible.
- **Electro Magnetic Fields:** Housing should not be developed in close proximity to possible sources of electro-magnetic fields or microwave radiation (e.g. overhead power lines, large transformers, mobile phone masts).

Waste

- **Domestic Waste:** Developments should encourage and enable residents to recycle domestic waste.
- **Construction Waste:** Development contracts should encourage the reduction of construction site waste by establishing targets for waste minimisation, insisting on separating waste materials on site for re-use or recycling and encouraging prefabrication of components where possible.

Water

Water Conservation

Water should be conserved and the use of mains water should be minimised for uses other than drinking.

Storm Water

Storm water run off should be reduced and methods implemented to reduce the risk of flooding.

Sewage Treatment

Systems for the disposal of human waste which use little or no water should be considered.

Landscapes

Ecological Value

Developments should enhance the landscape and ecology of sites. Existing areas of high quality landscape and/or existing valuable ecologies which support plants, mammals, birds and insects should be protected.

Microclimate

- **Modification:** Orientation of buildings should be to maximise passive solar gain. Provision should be made however to protect buildings from overheating in summer. Shelter from prevailing winds should be designed in, to minimise heat loss from wind chill in winter.
- **Climate Change:** Developments should be designed with consideration to predictions for future increased rainfall and storm frequency, as well as greater extremes of temperature.

Local Crop Production

Developments should encourage and enable residents to produce food locally.

Access to Open Space

Developments should allow all residents to have access to a variety of high quality open spaces for amenity and leisure use.

Travel

Reduce the Need to Travel

Developments should be planned to reduce the need to travel by developing at increased densities with a mix of uses so that facilities and employment opportunities are all within close proximity.

Alternatives to Cars

- **Public Transport:** Developments should be within easy walking distance of an existing or planned frequent or regular public transport service which provides access to a local centre, town or transport node.
- **Cycling:** Developments should encourage cycling as an alternative to car use by providing safe cycle routes and cycle storage
- **Walking:** Developments should encourage walking as an alternative and healthy form of transport by providing safe pedestrian routes.

Cars

- **Traffic Calming:** Developments should include measures to give pedestrians priority and ensure their safety in areas where cars are not segregated from pedestrians.
- **Car Pooling:** Developments should encourage and enable the use of car sharing and the setting up of a car pool.
- **Alternative Fuels:** The use of alternative, less environmentally damaging fuels for cars should be encouraged
- **Parking:** A reduced ratio of car parking should be provided in appropriate locations where alternative forms of more sustainable forms of transport are available to residents.

Conclusion

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A Better Quality of Life, a strategy for sustainable development in the UK was published in 1999. This recognised that sustainable development has a social and economic dimension in addition to protection of the environment and the prudent use of natural resources.

To monitor progress towards sustainable development, the Government is proposing to track 15 headline indicators each year. Many of these are linked to housing and community issues. Combined with targets, the indicators can be used to measure progress towards sustainable development.

In summary, the objectives of sustainable development now underpin new national, regional and local government legislation and are incorporated in Scottish Executive and Communities Scotland strategy.

The Association believe we have responded in a positive manner to this important strategy by developing a Policy which supports the sustainability principles of “think global, act local” through:

- Embedding sustainability issues throughout the organisation
- Promoting sustainability to the wider community
- Developing partnerships for sustainability
- Developing indicators and reporting regularly on progress

Distribution

This policy will be provided to every employee and committee member and will be made freely available to any tenant or interested party.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed as required, but at least on a 3 year cycle.

The review will take account of legislative changes, new policy guidance, best practice advice and the views of tenants and other users.

The Association will offer tenants the opportunity to discuss proposed policy and practice changes.

--- END OF POLICY ---

Appendix 1 - Action Plans

Action Plans

The following 3 Year Action Plan identifies 'Targets' against the 8 Key Themes.

Progress will be reported on a regular basis to the Board and Staff and made available to partners and the general public.