



POLICY

SUSTAINABILITY

Policy Reviewed October 2023

Wellhouse - The Place To Be

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1. Vision and values

Wellhouse – the Place to Be.

This simple statement is our vision of Wellhouse as an attractive place where people feel happy and safe, benefit from having a good home and an attractive environment and feel proud to be part of a vibrant community.

We believe that our values of Trust, Honesty and Integrity, Excellence, Accountability and Sustainability supported by a comprehensive policy framework will help make our vision a reality.

2. Governance

Wellhouse HA is a community controlled registered social landlord and is managed by a group of local people who are elected onto the Management Committee. Their role is to make sure that the Association is well run, meets the needs of the local area and is responsive to what is important to local people.

The Management Committee appoints senior staff, agrees all the Association's policies and takes all the key decisions. The Director and the senior team support the Committee in these responsibilities.

3. Policy Aims

The objectives of the policy are to ensure that we:

- Reduce our adverse local and global environmental impact through tackling climate change, moving towards zero-waste and increasing the use of renewable energy
- Create physical conditions for sustainable communities by realising the opportunities offered by individual locations, their environments, their past heritage and their relationship to local or regional factors such as business growth, improving employment markets and transport links
- Create social conditions for sustainable communities by the delivery of a wide range of socially inclusive regeneration, housing and support services and activities.
- Support the stability of communities and tenancies
- Use resources in a sustainable way
- Reduce expenditure
- Reduce, Reuse and Recycle

4. Equal Opportunities Statement

We aim to ensure that all services, including the delivery of this policy, provide equality of opportunity.

We will respond to the different needs and service requirements of individuals. We will not discriminate against any individual for any reason, including age, disability, gender re-

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assignment, marriage, civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, or other status.

The operation of this policy will always be in accordance with the principles set out within our Equality & Diversity Policy.

5. Introduction

This policy has been devised to show how Wellhouse Housing Association (Wellhouse) will undertake our business activities in a sustainable manner. We shall support and deliver improvements in the quality of life for individual customers and the communities in which we work, without compromising the needs or aspirations of future generations. We shall aim to minimise the impact of our business on the environment, and be recognised as a socially responsible and ethical business.

6. Principles

The following principles govern the operation of this policy:

The Management Committee by formally approving the policy, accepts full responsibility for the policy and ensuring its implementation.

The management and development of all services provided by Wellhouse will be designed to minimise any adverse impact of our business on the environment. We shall support and deliver services to improve the quality of life for individual customers and the communities in which we work, without compromising the needs or aspirations of future generations.

Our buildings and associated infrastructure will be developed, improved and maintained to provide high quality living or working environments.

Our design brief for all new build and major repair and improvement works will include a requirement to design homes which optimise the use of finite natural resources, energy consumption and the production of waste and emissions.

Methods of building construction and maintenance and procurement will be evaluated by assessing their impact and benefits in relation to sustainability objectives. Evaluation will take account of the whole life of properties including construction and decommissioning phases.

Wellhouse will be open to introducing new technology, materials and ways of working to achieve sustainability objectives. Wellhouse will seek to spread risks attached to new initiatives by adopting and evaluating a range of approaches when introducing novel or unproven methods

7. The Policy

SCOPE OF THE POLICY

This policy is relevant to every activity of Wellhouse. Each activity will be required to include measures to improve its sustainability its widest sense. Wellhouse is committing to operate according to strategies for sustainability providing environmental, social, economic and organisational benefits.

7.1 Environmental sustainability will be promoted by:

Incorporating effective features in our design guides for any new building, repairs and refurbishment to reduce the use of finite natural resources, reduce energy consumption and reduce production of waste and emissions which are not amenable to reuse or recycling.

Ensuring developments are sustainable. Construction methods and materials used will be considered and monitored in detail for each contract. Sustainability of development will also be based on assessment of long term demand for the type of property and by designing properties capable of adaptation to meet changing needs of users.

Impact assessments of any proposed developments will be made to identify those which will minimise environmental disadvantages and promote social, organisational or economic benefits.

High quality housing and environmental design to support places where people want to live.

We will meet EESH and SHQS standards.

7.2 Social sustainability will be promoted by:

Demonstrating commitment to corporate social responsibility in all our activities

Supporting charitable projects by our own employees and supporting external charities

Supporting the work of Easthall Residents Association as a core partner in our wider role activities

Promoting inclusion in our services and communities

Working to improve tenancy sustainment rates

Implementing our asset management strategy

7.3 Economic sustainability will be promoted by:

Supporting an affordable warmth strategy and adopting the EHRA challenging poverty charter

Implementing a procurement strategy which balances direct costs to Wellhouse with costs to the wider community and to the environment

Designing and evaluating new business opportunities according to sustainable criteria

Incorporating Community Benefits, training, and local employment opportunities into our services and procurement activities

7.4 Organisational sustainability will be promoted by planned activities relating to:

Energy use, generation and conservation

Making effective use of information technology and reduce printing, physical files and stationery use

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Management of office space

Sustainable business practices in all of our activities - reduce; re-use; recycle

Equalities, and diversity.

Inclusion of economic benefits.

8. APPROACH AND METHOD

Day to day responsibility for the operation and monitoring of this policy lies with the senior staff. All relevant employees have a responsibility to ensure that the policy is applied as instructed.

The policy will be implemented using the following approaches:

- We shall devise procedures for compliance with this policy
- We shall review procedures at least every 3 years and implement measures to improve efficiency and sustainability
- We shall evaluate technical measures which become available to reduce the use of finite natural resources, reduce energy consumption and reduce production of waste and emissions which are not amenable to reuse or recycling. We shall work to identify the most suitable of these for the activities of Wellhouse, including procurement in all fields, design and contract management for new buildings and property repairs, the environmental performance of our office buildings and the management of travel by our employees.
- We shall provide and develop a range of support services and facilities to foster tenancy sustainment, independent living and personal development for individuals and to reinforce our socially inclusive approach to housing management and to community regeneration.
- We shall ensure that our business practices effectively enable us to re-use or recycle materials and reduce waste; to print less, print less expensively and use less stationery and printed material; to reduce mail. Purchase of equipment and consumption of resources will be governed by this policy. Minimise use of paper and office consumables, for example by double siding all paper use and identifying ways to reduce waste. Reuse or recycle office waste. Purchase energy efficient office equipment and operate good housekeeping. Purchase electricity from a supplier committed to renewable energy. Seek to increase use of renewable energy such as wind turbines, geo thermal systems where possible. Ensure all timber furniture and other items are produced from recycled or well managed sustainable sources. Purchase where possible, fair trade or organic beverages.
- We shall encourage employees to use public transport or the least environmentally adverse mode of transport which is available, practical and reasonable for business travel and encourage this approach to journeys between home and work. Where possible we will walk, cycle or use public transport to attend meetings, visits etc..
- Avoid physically travelling to meetings by making more use of alternatives to reduce the need to travel to meetings without sacrificing the benefits of regular contact with partners, clients etc.

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- Support alternative working arrangements, including working from home and promote the use of car share and public transport.
- Use available technology for phone or video conferencing.
- Commit to use Laptops and Virtual Boardroom software rather than paper for management committee meetings.
- We shall provide employees with the training and guidance needed to implement this policy. Procedures and other reference materials will be kept up to date and accessible at all times.
- We shall monitor adherence to policy requirements and procedures

9. MONITORING, PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT AND REPORTING

The following areas will be subject to monitoring:

- Risk management
- Provision of training and / or information to staff
- The need for review of procedures
- The applicability of new methods of working and technical developments
- Performance towards meeting success criteria identified in our sustainability strategy/action plan. This will include an annual report to the Management Committee.

These will be monitored by the senior staff and reported to the Director. If any significant issues of concern arise these will be dealt with by the Director who will report such matters to the Wellhouse Management Committee. Any matter which demonstrates a serious failure of internal controls should also be reported immediately to the Chair.

Actions may be taken against employees or Committee members who act in contravention of this policy in the performance of their duties or decision making on behalf of Wellhouse. Actions could be measures to improve the individual's work performance, or disciplinary action, or other measures. Contravention of this policy should be understood to include contravention or disregard of any associated procedures and other guidance.

Audits of policy compliance may be conducted by the Internal Auditor. Audit results will be reported to the Audit & Risk Committee and the Management Committee.

10. COMPLAINTS & APPEALS

Wellhouse has a policy and procedures for responding to complaints about any of our services. You can complain in person at our office, by phone, in writing, e-mail or by using our complaints form. All customers are welcome to speak to a member of our staff at the service they are complaining about in order to try to resolve any problems on the spot.

Our complaints procedures have two stages. If we cannot resolve your complaint at the first stage you can ask for your complaint to be investigated further through stage two of our procedures. For more information about how to make a complaint please contact a member

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of staff at the Wellhouse office.

11. POLICY REVIEW

Wellhouse will undertake to review this policy at least every 3 years with regard to:

- applicable legislation, rules, regulations and guidance.
- changes in the organization.
- continued best practice.

The outcome of each review will be reported to the Committee of Management with any necessary recommendations for updating the policy.

Appendix 1

SUSTAINABILITY POLICY –Development and maintenance

1. INTRODUCTION

Having a good quality home in a pleasant and safe environment is a basic requirement for living what is considered a good life. Nothing can guarantee that our tenants will live to an old age or have a successful career, but poor housing and neighbourhood reduces the chances of both. Getting the housing right provides and platform to improve life chances, create inclusion and build a sustainable community.

Wellhouse Housing Association is committed to increasing the quality of life of its neighbourhood and ensures that developments meet the present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to prosper.

The Scottish Government has set out short, medium and long term goals and when they are to be achieved by in the [Climate Change \(Emissions Reduction Targets\) \(Scotland\) Act 2019](#).

In a policy context, The Scottish Government state that targets to reduce carbon emissions will include interim targets of a 75% reduction in emissions by 2030 and 90% by 2040

Scotland's net zero emissions target date of 2045 is ahead of many other countries, including the UK whose target is to reach net zero by 2050.

A 'green' approach can bring direct benefits and the Association is committed to improving its environmental performance by addressing:-

- Energy conservation
- Resource conservation
- Reduction in pollution and use of hazardous substances
- Reduction in waste
- Increase in recycling

2. SELF ASSESSMENT

The Association wishes to ensure that our policies and actions are underpinned by our commitment to sustainability. We consider the impact we can have in improving the economic, social and environmental circumstances of the wider community.

Therefore a series of questions that RSL's should ask in their approach to repairing, maintaining, improving and building new homes are;

- Demonstrate an awareness of environmental sustainability issues such as energy efficiency, emissions, brownfield developments.
- Reflect legislation and good practice.
- Identify environmental issues important to our organisations, how we intend to address these and include measurable targets.

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- Demonstrate that we assess sustainability issues when we procure contractors, goods and services.
- Are our policies and practices for landlord services framed in a way that takes account of their wider economic and social impacts in terms of individual and local community sustainability.
- Are our investment decision and wider role activities informed by an understanding of local priorities and consideration of their broader impact on the community.
- In our work with other agencies, do we promote a strategic and co-ordinated approach to investment decisions and policy initiatives which takes into account their potential impacts on areas economic, social and environmental sustainability.

3. WIDER ROLE CONTEXT

The Association works in partnership to look wider than housing. ERA are the main drivers in wider action activity. Full details are outlined in our 'Wider Role Strategy'. Both organisations will be committed to promoting:-

- Economic growth of the residents of Wellhouse irrespective of tenure
- Open access to housing, education, work and money advice
- Improvement to health, well-being, life balance and happiness
- Access to social activities, sport and fun for people of all ages and abilities
- Advice, support and mentoring
- Assistance with childcare and family support.

4. PRINCIPLES OF THIS POLICY

Wellhouse will base all its landlord duties in a sustainable manner based on the following principles:

- Comply with legislation, regulations and codes of practice.
- Integrate sustainability considerations into all our business decisions.
- Ensure all staff are fully aware of our Sustainability Policy and are committed to implementing and improving it.
- Minimise the impact on sustainability of all office and transportation activities.
- Ensure contractors, consultants and suppliers are aware of our Sustainability Policy and adopt sound sustainable management practices.

Development and Maintenance

Appointments of Contractors and Consultants.

- Ensure that all contractors and consultants can demonstrate a commitment to sustainable work practices.

Pre-Design

- To tackle social exclusion and poverty with strategies, dealing with the inter-related problems of unemployment, crime, poor health, housing, education and degraded local surroundings.
- To enable residents and the local community most affected by any development to play an active role in decision making through a public participation policy
- To consider re-use of existing built assets rather than the need for new build
- To favour Brownfield wherever possible for new construction

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- To look for opportunities to redevelop existing sites
- To site developments away from sources of noise which are likely to be detrimental to residents health and well being
- To site development away from areas of high air pollution.
- To re-use existing buildings on site wherever possible, or if demolition is unavoidable, to re-use or recycle the demolition materials.
- To select sites such that services and facilities should be easily accessible by foot and/or public transport
- To make the most of the site by studying its history and purpose, local microclimates and the prevailing winds and weather patterns, solar orientation, provision of public transport and the form of surrounding buildings
- To minimise energy demand by taking maximum advantage of site selection and planning
- To minimise energy requirement by optimising the building design
- To minimise energy consumption by optimising the engineering services design
- To design at a density which makes most efficient use of land and reduces the need to travel?
- To ensure that consultants selected have an awareness of sustainability issues and expertise in sustainable construction.

Design

- To maximise energy conservation by using energy efficient building forms and internal layouts.
- To design the buildings to minimise running costs.
- To design the buildings to minimise their impact on the environment over their life span.
- To maximise opportunities for passive solar gain and minimise wind chill
- To maximise the use of energy from renewable sources in preference to energy from non-renewable sources
- To design and construct buildings so that the materials can be easily re-used or recycled on demolition.
- To minimise waste during operation.
- To design for ease of maintenance.
- To avoid materials and products which may possibly be toxins, mutagens, carcinogens, pathogens and allergens.
- To provide a level of ventilation which will control humidity and odours without causing discomfort from draughts or imposing an excessive heating load.
- To minimise air pollution from building products in use.
- To optimise the building envelope and develop passive solar strategies.
- To ensure maximum daylight access for habitable areas?
- To maintain high level of indoor air quality.
- To protect against release of microbial hazards into ambient air.
- To design for ease of future adaptability.
- To reduce and avoid if possible, the use of rare and non-renewable resources.
- To maximise the potential life cycle length of development.
- To consider reuse and recycling principles where temporary structures are required.
- To investigate opportunities to reduce reliance on fossil fuels and to use cleaner power sources.

- To consider the utilization of CHP, Ground/Air source heat pumps, fuel cells, photovoltaic panels, battery storage, solar hot water, and other renewable energy sources.
- To design and configure development to avoid undesirable wind effects.
- To ensure the layout, design and specification is in accordance with Secure by Design standards.
- To include measures to give pedestrians priority and ensure their safety in areas where cars are not segregated from pedestrians.
- To incorporate methods for mitigating the effects of noise pollution
- To ensure all dwellings are accessible to all, including people with disabilities.
- To enhance the landscape and ecology of sites.
- To protect existing areas of high quality landscape and/or existing valuable habitats
- To provide dedicated open space and greenways
- To minimise noise transmission within multiple-occupancy buildings
- To reduce maintenance and irrigation requirements by giving preference to native plant species
- To explore opportunities to provide habitats for wildlife and to restore degraded site areas

Pre-Construction

- To adopt a form of contractual arrangement that encourages all stakeholders to act in partnership
- To ensure that contractors selected have an awareness of sustainability issues and expertise in sustainable construction.
- To develop contracts which encourage the reduction of construction site waste by establishing targets for waste minimisation,
- To insist on separating waste materials on site for re-use or recycling and encouraging prefabrication of components where possible.

Construction

- To use construction techniques which are indigenous to the area, wherever possible
- To avoid using materials from non-renewable sources or which cannot be re-used or recycled.
- To optimise use of renewable materials in construction.
- To optimise use of recyclable materials in construction.
- To optimise use of materials with recyclable content in construction.
- To promote and utilise local enterprise and local products, therefore contributing to the local economy and increasing local employment opportunities.
- To reduce the need for transport during demolition, refurbishment and construction
- To balance cut/fill and minimise importation of fill and topsoil.
- To protect existing residents and neighbours from noise pollution during construction or maintenance.
- To minimise waste in construction.
- To minimise energy in construction.
- To minimise greenhouse gas emissions during construction phase.

Post –Completion

- To develop links to public transit .
- To encourage and enable residents to recycle domestic waste.

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- To create strategies for pedestrian friendly, mixed use communities.
- To provide appropriate levels of safety and security.
- To control contaminated run-offs from polluting sources such as parking areas.
- To avoid standing water conditions that encourage the generation of bio-pollutants.

5. MONITOR AND EVALUATION

All sections of the organisation will ensure that staff members are aware of sustainability and how it affects their day to day work. Each section will monitor their work and day to day procedures in line with this policy.

Appendix 2

WELLHOUSE HOUSING ASSOCIATION

ACTION PLAN 2023-25

Awareness Training

- Continue to develop Energy Efficiency Standards and join/participate in working groups
- Circulate relevant literature to the community and staff
- Support front line staff to provide basic energy advice to residents
- Provide energy advice in publicity material(s)

Training Initiatives

- Improve life chances for school leavers and unemployed by seeking for community benefits from contractors as part of procurement/tender process

Environmental Project(s)

- Produce an attractive place for the community to use.
- Encourage community involvement to Increase the biodiversity of derelict ground and ensure that fly tipping is kept to a minimum
- Ensure any new developments will incorporate non gas heating systems
- Upgrade and increase lifespan of mature trees

Wider Role

- Support of The Hub and ERA
- Continuation of money advice service
- Development of Training & Employment initiatives
- Awareness via maximising all staff in wider role activities.
- Annually assess our financial support to ERA and social activities such as the Christmas Fare.

General

- Support money advice projects
- Increase awareness of recycling – as the norm for all households
- Educate the community in sustainability issues

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- All new developments will incorporate non-gas heating systems.

Policy

- Incorporate sustainability in relevant policy reviews

Appendix 3

AIM	ACTIVITY	TARGET (BENCHMARK)	COMMENT
WASTE REDUCTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction in use of general unsorted waste • Digital Communication • Double-sided papers for meetings + policy circulation 	Reduce general waste by 50% by June 2025	
	Explore possibility of further waste separation by WHA and partner organisations within Hub building		
RECYCLING + RE-USE	Use recycled products and materials <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stationery • Paper and other consumables 	On-going audit of office to ensure that these are being used	
	Recycle waste paper, magazines, circulars and card	Contact magazine providers to reduce number of copies sent and being unused Introduce appropriate waste containers to encourage paper to be recycled	
	Recycle Drinks Cans	Increase 2% (Bags per Annum)	
ENERGY CONSERVATION	Reduce energy consumption of office complex by scoping alternative lighting and heating controls	Reduction of 20% in fuel costs	

RENEWABLE ENERGY	Explore the possibility of using renewable energy sources to address some of the energy needs of the office	Explore costs and savings associated with Solar PV installation	
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