

policy



environmental sustainability

Responsible Officer:	ACE Asset Management
Approved:	June 2016
Review Date:	June 2018
Regulatory Standard:	Home
Scope:	Group Wide

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 In line with our vision of improving lives Incommunities, we recognise that we have an important role to play in protecting and enhancing our environment. This policy sets out Incommunities Group's approach to environmental sustainability.
- 1.2 Environmental sustainability is defined in this context as meeting the present needs of our customers and organisation, without reducing the environment's capacity to allow all people to live well, now and in the future.

2.0 Statement of Intent

- 2.1 Incommunities Group believes that environmental sustainability is essential for our customers, our communities and our business and recognises that our activities, buildings and homes have an impact on the environment. We aim to improve the quality of life of our customers, meet our legal obligations and have a positive environmental impact through our homes and services.

3.0 Policy

Our homes

- 3.1 We will provide Energy Performance Certificates (EPC) to prospective tenants, including an indication of the typical annual energy costs for the property.
- 3.2 We will aim to bring all our homes up to a minimum energy performance standard, where it is cost effective to do so, recognising the long-term value of these improvements to our customers and business.
- 3.3 We will ensure environmental sustainability is considered when taking decisions around the disposal and retention of housing stock.
- 3.4 We will assess and monitor the risk of a changing climate to our homes, residents and employees and impacts such as flooding, overheating and drought. Where appropriate, we will incorporate resilience measures into improvement works to properties.
- 3.5 We will ensure environmental considerations are taken into account when setting the specification for our new build properties, focusing on a 'fabric first' approach and taking into account future climate risks. We will look to make improvements on current building regulation requirements where appropriate and economically viable.
- 3.6 We will explore and embrace new, proven technologies to improve the sustainability of our homes and reduce costs for customers, where it is cost effective to do so.

Our people

- 3.7 We will seek to educate and encourage our customers, staff and contractors as to the benefits of environmentally sustainable living and working, recognising the importance of their role in delivering our sustainability vision.

- 3.8 We will consult with our customers and employees on our Sustainability Strategy and make our policy and strategy publicly available.
- 3.9 We will support our customers to minimise their environmental impact by providing information to help residents live more sustainably, and by supporting residents and their local communities to carry out environmental initiatives as far as reasonable and economically viable to do so.
- 3.10 We will provide advice and support to help our customers adapt to new technologies designed to improve the sustainability of their home.
- 3.11 We will work with partner agencies to tackle fuel poverty and signpost our customers towards the most appropriate energy tariff for their needs.
- 3.12 We will facilitate and support opportunities, through our community resilience programme, for peer-to-peer learning between our customers and communities, to develop awareness and action around energy efficiency and environmental sustainability.
- 3.12 We will encourage staff to recognise the positive impact they can have on environmental sustainability, both at work and at home to reduce our collective impact on the environment. We will encourage staff to get involved in sustainability initiatives across the organisation and put forward suggestions and ideas for how the organisation can improve its environmental performance.
- 3.13 We will ensure all staff are aware of this Policy and our Sustainability Strategy and provide appropriate learning and development to enable staff to implement this policy and carry out specific responsibilities and duties relating to environmental sustainability.

Our organisation

- 3.14 We will quantify a carbon footprint for the organisation, which will be updated annually. This will allow us to fully document our environmental impacts and measure improvements year on year.
- 3.15 We will set carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions reduction targets that are aligned to local and national policies. We will set specific objectives to achieve these targets considering cost effectiveness and viability, but also ancillary benefits in line with our Value for Money approach.
- 3.16 We will protect and, where possible, retain and create biodiversity on sites we own or manage where it is viable to do so.
- 3.17 We will maintain a record of relevant policies and environmental legislation and monitor for compliance.

- 3.18 We will seek, where practicable, to specify sustainable products; including a consideration of life cycle costs, sustainable sourcing and products made from recycled materials or designed to be easy to reuse or recycle.
- 3.19 We will use our influence to advise and monitor our suppliers and commercial partners to minimise their impact on the environment and, where appropriate, include sustainability targets in contract conditions.
- 3.20 We will dedicate sufficient resource to deliver the commitments set out in this policy and actively seek opportunities to take advantage of external funding to support delivery of sustainability work.

Environmental sustainability reporting

- 3.21 We will report annually on environmental sustainability initiatives carried out throughout the year and progress against the objectives set out in the Sustainability Strategy.

4.0 Implementation

- 4.1 Incommunities will develop a Sustainability Strategy which will set out how this policy will be implemented across the organisation. The Strategy will provide a framework for setting and reviewing specific targets and objectives relating to environmental sustainability.
- 4.2 The Sustainability Champion (ACE Asset Management) will retain a strategic level oversight of implementation of this Policy and the Sustainability Strategy. The corporate Sustainability Group will be responsible for implementing the Strategy across the organisation.

5.0 Performance Management

- 5.1 Incommunities is committed to continual improvement in environmental performance and will actively monitor and report on performance through the annual Sustainability Report to Executive Management Team
- 5.2 As part of the Sustainability Strategy work, KPIs may be set that link in with corporate performance monitoring work.
- 5.3 Appropriate benchmarking tool(s) will be used to review our performance against that of our peers.

6.0 Review

- 6.1 The Policy will be reviewed every two years, or as required by statutory or regulatory change. An internal review will be carried out following publication of the Sustainability Strategy to determine if an interim review is required in 2017.

7.0 Associated Documents

- Incommunities' Sustainability Strategy (in development)
- Incommunities' Site Waste Management Policy
- Incommunities' Procurement Policy (under review)
- Incommunities' Value for Money Strategy