

Environmental and Sustainability Policy

Policy Statement

Purpose

The aim of this policy is to recognise that the activities undertaken by Orwell have an impact on the environment, and in some cases may contribute to climate change.

The primary objectives of the policy are to demonstrate our commitment to minimising the adverse environmental impact of our activities and to improve our environmental performance as an organisation.

We want to minimise the harm that we cause to the local and global environment alongside maximising the quality of life for our customers.

Legal Obligations

- Climate Change Act 2008
- Environmental Protection Act 1990
- Environmental Act 2021

Orwell's Commitment

There is an increasing array of legal guidelines regarding the environment performance that we are required to meet within the housing association sector. We do not want to stop at just meeting our legal obligations and we will use the enthusiasm and commitment of everyone who works for Orwell to develop and encourage sustainability across our workplaces.

We will have a dedicated net zero focus group who will create and lead on our Environmental and Sustainability action plan focusing on key objectives, bringing environmental considerations explicitly into our corporate thinking and decision-making process, especially as they affect customers and the communities in which we work.

We will Inform and train our colleagues on how they can assist in meeting Orwell's environmental targets.

Our Environmental and Sustainability action plan will be at the heart of our activities. The Leadership team will regularly track progress and receive quarterly updates. The Board will receive an annual Environmental and Sustainability Report which will be in addition to the ESG report already provided.

We are committed to achieving clearly defined objectives to help us achieve our strategic aims:

- We are committed to ensuring that quality, sustainable and long-term value is at the heart of the construction of our new homes. The future homes standard will compel us to meet ambitious new energy efficiency standards by 2025. This will be done by focusing on the fabric first, with better insulation and low carbon heating.
- We will measure the environmental performance of our existing homes and identify priorities for improvements, implementing a realistic plan to make these changes. The plan will be developed with help from our residents, taking into account the things they say are most important and focusing on energy efficient homes.
- Improving property data is essential to improving energy efficiency and reducing carbon. We will train a suitable person in-house who has knowledge of our stock to more accurately assess the performance of our properties.
- We will continue to be a member of the Carbon Charter and build on our Silver accreditation by aiming to be a Gold member and leading the way for positive change. We will continue to look at all the major environmental aspects of our business and how we are addressing our environmental impacts, with a focus on reducing our carbon footprint.
- We will work towards adopting the certified sustainable housing label, which incorporates 30 social and environmental criteria linked to the UN's sustainable Development Goals.
- Our operations and practices relate to 7 of the 17 Sustainable development goals. We will adopt the new sustainability reporting standard for social housing so we can measure our wider social impact focusing on environmental performance, contribution to local communities and relationships with our customers and colleagues.
- We aim to provide user friendly advice and assistance to our customers and service users on the choices they can make to improve the efficiency of their homes and lessen their impact on the environment.
- We will reduce the environmental impact of our services and work we deliver including the prevention of pollution and to fulfil our compliance obligations.
- We will identify our pollution risks and put in place effective controls to improve the environment, health and wellbeing of our customers and communities.
- We will ensure the cost effectiveness of environmental proposals while complying with the requirements of our funders and regulators.
- We aim to improve our energy efficiency and reduce our use of resources.
- We are committed to conserving and enhancing the natural habitat and built environment for the benefit of our customers and the communities in which we work.
- We will meet our duty of care requirements and reduce waste deriving from what we do;
- We will also evaluate the emissions at our offices and the other storage sites/warehouses we have. This includes checking the premises' thermal efficiencies; insulation levels; windows & doors; and heating systems etc, including consideration of the feasibility of installing solar PV and EV chargers onsite.
- Our 2050 Net Zero target and the Net Zero Carbon Reduction plan will be based on the 2022 Net Zero Strategy report recommendations produced by Turner and Townsend.
- We will continue to review and update our Orwell Strategic plan, our ESG Report, and our Asset Management Strategic Plan 2025-2030 to reflect all aspirations outlined in this policy. These reports analyse in more detail the different carbon reduction actions Orwell has taken and will continue to take on its sustainability journey.