



PO37 Environmental Policy

Approval

Approved by Tenants' Forum	14 July 2011
Approved by Board	27 July 2011
Due for Review	July 2014

Review undertaken

Resident involvement	8 February 2011 – Scrutiny Group discussion 13 April 2011 – Tenants' Focus Group
Equality Impact Assessment	
Other consultation	

Policy Statement

Soha has a commitment to protect the environment. We will consider the environmental impact of all our business decisions and when possible act in a way that minimises damage to the environment.

We will strive to actively reduce the environmental impact of all of Soha's activities and encourage and enable our residents to do likewise.

Scope of Policy

This document sets out the approach to be adopted by Soha when considering environmental issues.

The scope of this policy covers:

- Energy Efficiency
- Water Conservation
- Materials
- Waste
- Ecology
- Continually work with the Board, Tenants' Forum residents and staff to protect the environment

Aim

The aim of the policy is to:

- Ensure that Soha and those with whom it works carry out activities in a manner that minimises the impact on the environment.
- Highlight environmental issues to residents to assist them to live in a way that minimises the impact on the environment. Positively encourage and empower our residents to be aware of the lifestyle choices available.

Implementation

- A detailed action plan will be drawn up to cover the scope of the policy. The plan will provide a SMART target for each action and progress will be monitored regularly. The action plan will be drawn up by a group comprising of residents, Board members, Environmental Champion and officers.
- The policy will be implemented across the whole range of Soha's business including: developing new homes; the maintenance and improvement of existing properties; supporting and enhancing communities; and the carrying out of commercial activities and the occupation of commercial premises.
- Soha will use its position as landlord, business partner and employer to influence the behaviour of others and find ways of helping them to reduce the environmental impact of decisions and actions.
- Corporate decisions will be made having given consideration to any environmental impact.
- Soha will keep aware of all environmental issues and be receptive to new technologies and advancements that are friendly to the environment.

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- Value for Money will be taken into account when making decision that impact on the environment.

The action plan will consider the following:

- Energy Efficiency – Improvement of the energy efficiency of the existing housing stock and new developments by improvements to the building fabric, adoption of lower carbon energy technologies and lower energy light fittings and appliances.
- Water conservation – Improvement of the water consumption of the existing stock and new developments by the use of water efficient appliances, grey water recycling and rainwater harvesting.
- Materials – Use of building materials and construction methods that are responsibly sourced and with a low impact on the environment and existing infrastructure and drainage systems.
- Waste – A reduction in waste generated including construction waste and a commitment to sort, reuse and recycle. The provision of appropriate recycling opportunities to our homes and offices.
- Ecology and Biodiversity – To recognise the ecological value and biodiversity of development land and to protect and enhance ecological features to maximise the development of Brownfield sites. To retain and enhance the ecological features and biodiversity of our existing schemes.

Monitoring and Review

- The environmental action plan will be monitored and reviewed by the Director of Property and Development on a six monthly basis to ensure compliance with targets. Quarterly meetings will take place with the Tenants' Environmental Champion.
- An annual report will be taken to Board and Tenants' Forum outlining what has been achieved/undertaken.
- We will continually review our policy to ensure our efforts are properly targeted.

Context of Policy

All aspects of this policy should be read in the context of Soha's Asset Management Strategy and Development Strategy and the Housing Corporation's document 'Sustainable Development Strategy'.

Responsibility

The Director of Property and Development is responsible for the effective implementation of this policy.