



SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY

1. MISSION STATEMENT

ISHA's environmental sustainability strategy focuses on the following objectives:

- To tackle fuel poverty;
- To improve the energy efficiency of our customers' homes;
- To continue to meet our carbon reduction targets; and
- To minimise the environmental impacts of our activities.

"I'm delighted ISHA has been awarded the SHIFT Gold Award. This is recognition of the importance we place on environmental sustainability. We work hard to understand our negative environmental impacts and take action to reduce them."

Stephen Stringer, Chair: ISHA

"The Executive Team is committed to continuing our journey to reduce our negative impact on the environment. We know that environmental sustainability is not just about reducing the amount of waste we produce, nor just about using less energy, but is also concerned with developing processes that will lead to ISHA and Lien Viet becoming more sustainable in the future. ISHA's responsibilities include providing for the aging population and building fuel-efficient lifetime homes. This strategy outlines what we still want to achieve and is backed up with a more detailed action plan"

Clare Thomson, Chief Executive.

This strategy addresses how issues of environmental sustainability will be embedded in our organisation. The strategy contributes to ISHA's overall strategic plan, and in particular to Strategic Plan Objective 3 "To maintain, improve and develop good quality and affordable homes in our key community areas."

To help us measure our performance in achieving our environmental targets, we have joined the Sustainable Homes Index For Tomorrow (SHIFT). SHIFT is a sector specific tool which provides external validation of the steps that housing providers are taking to embed environmental sustainability in their organisations. It was developed in partnership with Housing Associations, the Homes and Communities Agency, Environment Agency, National Housing Federation, UK Green Building Council and others. It also provides sector wide benchmarking and comparisons of performance and lessons in good practice.

The SHIFT system encourages continuous improvement and offers four grades of award bronze, silver, gold and platinum. We are delighted that ISHA has now achieved the SHIFT Gold Standard which recognises our commitment to environmental issues. We will continue to develop our action plan to continue our progress which we will review annually.

Reference	Version	Created	Author	Review	Board Approved
Sustainability strategy	2	July 2018	Colin Archer	July 2021	26 July 2018

This strategy is divided into three sections:

- Strategy and management;
- Office practices and Existing buildings; and
- New build.

Each section has a brief statement of the outcome ISHA wishes to achieve, and a summary of the current position. The activities needed to achieve the proposed outcome are outlined in the action plan the latest version of which is available on our website.

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Strategy and management

ISHA aims to:

- Reduce our negative impacts on the environment;
- Improve the understanding of the sustainability of our homes at every level of our organisation; and
- Make sure that our customers have the means to reduce fuel poverty and have the opportunity to participate in efforts to reduce their carbon footprint.

ISHA first adopted a Sustainable Development Strategy in 2009. This referred principally to new developments and for instance did not cover the refurbishment of existing stock. A comprehensive development strategy for all our activities was first adopted in 2014.

ISHA has already made a number of significant investments in “greening” our various activities. Examples include the installation of photovoltaic panels on the office roof, the retrofitting photovoltaic panels to 12 existing blocks of flats, the development of nearly 500 code four plus homes. In 2009 ISHA won “Small Business CO2 reduction of the Year” by Islington Council for work to cut emissions within our own buildings, but also “on their extensive engagements with their tenants in order to demonstrate the links between carbon reduction and cost savings.”¹

In 2016 “The Scene” our award-winning scheme in the centre of Walthamstow was the winner of “the Best Sustainable High Density Scheme” at the National Housing Design Awards.

As a result of the investment in our stock, our average SAP rating is assessed as one of the highest scores of all SHIFT members and indicates the priority ISHA gives to the thermal comfort of our buildings and efficiency of the heating systems we provide customers. Going forward we want to tackle the relative poor thermal performance of some of our older stock and eventually provide all our customers with warm, affordable homes.

This strategy builds on these achievements and clarifies the priority areas for improvement. It considers the likely timescales and investment needed, identifies relevant ways in which the required improvements can be measured and monitored. It also provides for an annual review by the Board, of the robustness of the plan and the need to make changes where appropriate. The review will include an analysis of whether the previous years required outcomes have been achieved, whether the action plan going forward needs updating and a value for money assessment on the investment achieved.

Throughout the process internal and external stakeholders will be updated on our progress and invited to help in making the improvements we seek.

¹ Islington Giant Green Business Awards Judges’ comments

As outlined the action plan we have adopted smart KPIs to measure the improvements we have made. These KPI's address all aspects of sustainability throughout the organisation including;

- Adaptation to climate change
- Energy efficiency
- Sustainable materials
- Water efficiency
- Office waste management
- Construction waste management
- Flytipping
- Ecology
- Green transport
- Resident engagement
- Staff engagement

The action plan allocates responsibility to each director whose responsibility it will be to see that specific actions arising from the target is delegated appropriately. Achievements of targets set by the action plan will be incorporated into the annual appraisal system as appropriate.

The sustainability strategy will be reviewed with staff via staff and team meetings and staff training will be held on various aspects of the sustainability strategy. New members of staff will be told of their role in adopting sustainable behaviours and achieving sustainability targets via the induction process.

The association's strategy and action plan will be publicised to our customers and other stakeholders including on the associations website and their involvement encouraged (see later section)

Business (Office) Environmental Management

ISHA wants to ensure that our day to day activities are carried out in a way that is sensitive to the environment and minimises our carbon footprint thereby reducing our energy consumption leading to lower costs and improved efficiency.

To help achieve the above aims the association invested heavily in improving the energy efficiency of our offices including a new roof at our main offices including Photovoltaic panels, new double glazing and energy efficient lighting to reduce the need for staff to use their own vehicles to travel to work, we provide pools cars, have a cycle to work scheme and provide season ticket loans for public transport. We recycle all the paper used in our offices and we encourage staff to reduce power consumption by switching off lights etc. We use Procurement for Housing to advise on the value for money sourcing of equipment and wherever possible purchase only Fairtrade consumables e.g. tea and coffee.

Because of the existing investment we have made, our CO₂ emissions from our offices is already lower than the majority of SHIFT members. However, we intend to reduce this still further by carrying out an energy audit to see where we are at risk of overheating the office, identify where further investment would reduce energy consumption etc. We will pay particular attention to our water usage and compare it to the benchmark set by SHIFT of 9m³ per employee.

We will look to reduce the amount of waste per employee including recycling below the current level per employee and increase our use of environmental friendly products including inks and printer cartridges.

Sustainable Asset Management (Existing Buildings)

The Asset Management Strategy supports the implementation of ISHA's strategic objectives, as set out in the business plan, and balances the competing needs for investment. A key priority of the strategy is to ensure that ISHA delivers an excellent and accountable service to our customers. ISHA recognises that fuel poverty and energy efficiency are key concerns for our customers.

ISHA created a baseline of all its properties by carrying out a full energy audit in 2005. Since then all new property energy details are added to the database, and all voids are reviewed and updated. All other stock is updated on a seven-year rolling cycle in line with the cyclical works programme. In April every year a snap shot of the information retained on our properties is used to assess our current average SAP score.

The asset management strategy highlights the importance of ensuring that all its stock meets a minimum EPC rating of C. All voids are refurbished to this level. In addition, the annual asset plan identifies through its stock and energy efficiency surveys properties where the thermal efficiency can be improved and costs to the customers reduced by installation of double glazing, insulation and retro fit of energy saving devices such as photo voltaic panels.

Future programmes will continue to be assessed following energy surveys completed during the cyclical decoration and repairs programme and when properties become void. These surveys will inform our future short term and medium-term programmes.

The association is committed to reducing fuel poverty amongst its customers. The association was one of a small number of associations involved in the National Energy Study which found only a limited correlation between the energy performance of the building and energy bills. Customers understanding and action on how to save energy were found to be a much more important factor in reducing energy usage, hence we will be implanting a programme of active engagement with customers on ways they can reduce their energy costs training frontline staff to give energy advice etc...

Investment in our existing stock to improve thermal efficiency and reduce customers' utility bills will include the retro fitting of the following where suitable;

- Photovoltaic panels to existing blocks of flats;
- Replacement double glazing;
- Internal wall insulation to solid walls;
- Roof insulation;
- Low flow taps and showers;
- Low volume baths and dual flush WCs;
- Condensing boilers;
- Hot water cylinder thermostats and insulation;
- Recycling facilities;
- Rain water collection;
- Fitting of smart energy meters; and
- Fitting water meters where practicable.

In conjunction with general advice on reducing water usage and possibly in conjunction with installing equipment within the home to reduce water consumption e.g. low flow taps etc. Consideration will be given to helping resident's control their use of water by retrofitting water meters where possible, subject to consultation with those affected.

Our partnering contractors are committed to ensuring that building materials and practices are sustainable and to reduce waste. Waste minimisation figures will be collected from maintenance contractors. Better waste management facilities will be provided to more customers subject to the limitations of existing kitchen layouts and local authority recycling regimes. Further publicity will be given to customers on our bulk waste disposal arrangements etc.

The possibility of providing natural compost and havens for wildlife will be looked into on our larger sites.

A revised "green guide" issued new customers will also be given to existing customers via the internet Information will include green travel plans, avoiding overheating and the implications of climate change.

To save printing costs etc. customers will continue to be able to opt out of receiving ISHA's quarterly newsletter in the post and receive it electronically.

Sustainable Development Strategy (New Build)

ISHA sustainability strategy for new build addresses a wide range of social, economic and environmental concerns. Our development work contributes to sustainability through:

- Developing high quality housing stock, which contributes to our customers sense of well-being and health;
- Ensuring that our new homes are well designed and adaptable, reflect the needs of a multi-cultural society and cater for the needs of older people, vulnerable groups and those with special needs;
- Promoting on site practices that reduce the impact of construction upon the environment, making efficient use of the resources available and limiting waste;
- Ensuring that environmental concerns are addressed when selecting development sites (using brown field land where practicable) and the choice of building materials;
- Incorporating renewable energy and water saving technologies where possible, and driving down utilities costs to our customers.

We are committed to on-going improvement in our use of sustainable products and using renewable energy technologies, however we aim to offer solutions that are practical and relevant to our customers addressing the issues that matter to them. A sustainable home should be one that respects the limits of the planet's environmental resources and biodiversity, and it should also be a place that is warm, secure and easy to live in.

Design

A well-designed home is one which contributes to the environmental, social and economic sustainability of the community in which it lies.

The design process should be used to ensure that buildings, infrastructure and any public spaces are buildable, fit for purpose, resource efficient, sustainable, resilient, adaptable and attractive.

Our design processes will include real engagement with key stakeholders including existing customers. We will strive to build new homes which are easy to manage, cost effective to maintain and which offer the prospect of reduced running costs.

A well-designed building must also be future proof. Wherever practicable it must be adaptable: both to the future impacts of climate change and to the future needs of its customers.

Energy

We will provide housing that aims to reduce future CO² emissions and offers affordable warmth and hot water to our customers. We will design our homes to a minimum of SAP 86.

We recognise that heating, hot water and electricity running costs related to heating, hot water and electricity use are important to all our customers and we are committed to combating "fuel poverty". In designing our homes, we consider how the building is heated and cooled, its orientation and opportunities to exploit passive solar gain. By adopting a "fabric first" approach our homes will be well insulated and efficiently glazed.

Our new homes will incorporate renewable technologies wherever it can be demonstrated they will deliver tangible benefits for customers and the environment. We will seek new funding opportunities to support these initiatives where we can.

Any appliances supplied by us will be “A rated” energy efficient and our homes will provide suitable drying spaces.

We will ensure that all new customers receive detailed advice on how to minimise their energy costs and reduce their carbon emissions.

Water

ISHA will provide housing that minimises the overall impact on the local water supply.

All new homes will incorporate water conservation measures including low flow taps, dual capacity cisterns and water butts. We will consider the use of water recycling where appropriate.

We will, in conjunction with our consultants and the water authority, continuously review and implement ways of minimising the impact on existing water systems through the use of permeable brick pavements, and the provision of reed beds, and water holding areas such as gravel ponds etc.

Waste

ISHA will provide housing that minimises the accumulation of more waste.

We will ensure that all our new housing is designed to support recycling schemes. There should be sufficient space for segregated waste bins; encouraging our customers to easily recycle their waste. We will introduce compost bins where it is practical to do so.

We will design suitable recycling provision which best meets the local authorities recycling objectives and their refuse collection policies.

We will also encourage our contractors to minimise on site waste, ensuring that waste management plans are adopted and introducing targets for waste reduction.

Transport

We will encourage the development of new housing that has good access to public transport which minimises the use of the private car. We will seek to reduce parking provision to the minimum required to satisfy our customers for all new schemes. We will encourage the use of car clubs by our customers. We will provide new customers with detailed information about local public transport networks.

Before proceeding with a new development, we will assess whether the location has easy access to local facilities such as, schools, healthcare, post offices, parks and leisure facilities.

In negotiation with planning authorities, all new housing will include cycle storage that is well designed, easily accessible and secure thus encouraging our customers to use the bicycle as the transport of choice.

Future Proofing

We will carry out detailed assessments to make sure new homes will not be affected by the effects of climate change such as overheating now and in the future.

We will also assess the risk of surface water flooding and take appropriate steps to mitigate the risk where necessary.

ISHA recognises its responsibility for providing new homes for the aging population and is committed to building low energy cost life time homes.

Quality of development

We will seek to develop homes meeting exemplar environmental standards and will consider the wider environmental impact of its development programme and seek to minimise this impact wherever possible.

We will adopt landscaping schemes which enhance the environment and encourage indigenous species. We will also ensure that all new estate planting schemes will include plants that have resistance to drought and are easy to maintain.

We will adopt strategies to proactively encourage biodiversity: for all new development we will consider the inclusion of bat & bird boxes, green walls and green roofs. We will plant species which produce food sources such as berries and nuts which are suitable for native fauna.

In designing our new homes, we will consider the environmental impact of materials, fixtures and fittings used. We will encourage our contractors to use materials from sustainable sources and that minimise the length of journey from point of origin.

We have identified that the building regulations are not adequate to future proof buildings against the effect of climate change. We will insist that buildings have calculations on overheating based on realistic scenarios rather than the minimum required by statutory guidance.

Sustainable communities

ISHA will produce a targeted development strategy that promotes sustainable communities addressing diversity and community cohesion. We recognise that a sustainable community requires other amenities such as the proximity of schools, transport and community facilities.

We will promote development in areas in need of regeneration. However, we recognise that new developments can cause disruption to social cohesion and we will seek to counter this by actively engaging with local communities about their aspirations for their area (see our public consultation strategy).

We will strive to meet full Secure by Design standards for all our new homes. We will ensure that our new homes feel safe and secure; using passive surveillance and introducing Home Zones where possible.

We will ensure that the homes we build are flexible and adaptable to the future needs of our customers.

We will design places where people want to live and which they are happy to call home.

People

When selecting contractors ISHA will consider their approach to training and their Health and Safety Policies.

We will encourage our contractors to adopt a planned approach to training which can ensure that all projects are built by a fully trained, qualified and competent workforce on all projects.

To assist the local economy, where possible we will encourage contractors to procure from local suppliers and will encourage our contractors to offer training and apprenticeships to local people and our customers.

We have adopted a zero-harm approach to reduce the incidence rate of accidents on site. We will actively monitor this on all our sites. We will ensure our staff are fully aware of the potential risks involved in construction projects both to themselves, construction staff and future customers.