

Octavia Housing

Environmental Strategy
2010 - 2013



November 2009
Rev 3.0

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Octavia Housing Environmental Strategy

1 The Strategy

The overall aim of this strategy is to progressively reduce the environmental impact of the organisation across all activities.

To achieve this aim we propose to adopt the following overall approach:-

- To better understand what our current environmental impact is so we can more effectively target our resources.
- To improve our knowledge base of what works and to use recognised external standards (SHIFT, Eco homes and HQI) as benchmarks for assessing our effectiveness.
- To build in energy efficient, environmental and climate impact measures in our new build and refurbishment projects, in order to minimise the impact our homes have on the environment and to make them ready to address climate change issues such as excessive heat, water shortages and flash flooding.
- To use our reinvestment programme to target our worst performing homes as our first priority
- To implement a series of low cost measures to progressively reduce the environmental impact of the organisation across all activities

The following paragraphs set out the progress to date, and provides an overview of the approach we will adopt for the next five years.

Progress on this strategy will be reported to the Board on a two yearly basis. The strategy will be in the public domain and publicised to staff and residents. The action plan will be reviewed annually by the executive team.

2 Where are we now?

In order to assess the current position a report was commissioned in June 2009 to look at four operational areas:

- Strategy and management
- Office practices
- Existing buildings
- New buildings

The model used for the assessment was based on an approach developed by SHIFT (Sustainable Homes Index For Tomorrow) a body set up to benchmark housing

organisation supported by the Tenant Services Authority (TSA) and the Homes and Communities Agencies (HCA).

Strategy and Management

The last strategy was the Octavia Housing & Care: Environmental Strategy and Action Plan, May 2005. This concentrated on new build, existing and in house activities. This resulted in some positive measures being carried out specifically in regard to office activities and new build. The strategy did not, however, establish a clear base position against which performance could be gauged, and also lacked a governance structure to drive through the delivery of the strategy.

Office Practices

There has been considerable progress since 2005 -

- cycle to work scheme
- LPG Smart cars
- energy efficient new offices
- re-use and recycling of waste paper and IT consumables
- good use of public transport
- season ticket loans
- acquisition of charity shops
- good staff engagement
- use of printers/photocopiers review

Despite the good work it is difficult to assess how good our performance has been or what difference this has made. There are gaps in our knowledge, for example, the energy performance of the new office, the level of water consumption, the volume of waste recycled.

Existing buildings

Stock condition survey has provided Octavia with a great deal of energy data on our properties. The Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) (the recognised measure for the energy efficiency of housing) for our stock is 63; this places Octavia below the national average which is 68. A property with a score of 35 or less is considered to be a Health and Safety risk to residents on the basis of excessive cold.

Octavia's Asset Management Strategy 2008 has established a target to ensure no property has a SAP score of less than 50. This will address both excessive cold and fuel poverty issues. At present there are 588 properties which are below this target.

There has been a lot of work in recent years to improve the energy efficiency of the stock. This has included -

- contractors required to have environmental policy
- good progress on Decent Homes programme (95% complete)
- recycling advice to tenants
- working with LA's to promote energy efficiency

Octavia Housing Environmental Strategy

- two staff qualified as energy assessors
- insulation programmes to 45% of properties
- energy efficiency measures to 8% of properties
- technical staff training and conferences
- feasibility study on solar thermal
- water efficient components specified on voids
- signed up to Construction Commitments 'Halving Waste to Landfill' charter
- Involved with WISP (what if scenario portal) on precautions against extreme weather events
- Since 2007 we have been given £29,556 in energy grants, with a further £25,000 expected to be obtained by the end of 2010.

Again these are good steps to have taken but they were not part of a measured framework so we cannot say what progress or how successful we have really been.

New Build

This is the area of our work where we have made the most impact. The design standards set by the Homes and Communities Agency, which are a condition of funding, cover all the grant funded development programme and these, in addition to the Connected Sustainability Strategy have set high environmental standards. Properties will be built to Level 4 of the Code for Sustainable Homes from 2011, and Level 6 by 2015.

Progress since the 2005 strategy includes –

- Connected Sustainability Strategy in place
- Considerate Construction Scheme used
- Signed up to 2012 Construction Commitments
- All new developments built to EcoHomes 'Very Good' or Code for Sustainable Homes level 3.
- New developments planned to achieve Code for Sustainable Homes level 4
- All developments on 'brownfield' sites
- Green travel plans in place
- Cycle storage included
- Flood area risk assessments carried out

This strategy proposes that assessments are carried out into the cost in use of the measures needed to achieve these high code levels, and ensure that feedback is obtained from residents, staff and maintenance contractors on the reliability and effectiveness of the technologies.

3. Our approach going forward

The attached action plan sets out the detailed proposals for what we will do to implement this strategy over the next five years. The key items for noting are :-

- To measure progress on this strategy, more base-line data is needed. In some

case information is readily available (e.g. average SAP ratings) but in other cases it will need work to establish (e.g. energy usage from utility bills and quantities of waste).

- 2010 will be used as a 'learning year' to fill in the gaps in data and knowledge. The Performance Indicator table at Appendix 2 has suggested targets where base data exists, but where there are no targets the base data will be collected.
- That on completion of the collection of base data (i.e. by October 2010) we will be in a stronger position to calculate the detailed costs of implementing particular capital works programmes for taking forward different levels of capital works.
- At the same time we will continue the on going programme of project based work that will enable us to take forward this strategy.

4. Finances

The only direct additional cost of this strategy in the short term is the proposed membership of SHIFT. This will be £2,100, which includes two 'learning' events for the remainder of 2009 / 2010 (and absorbed within existing budgets) and included in the budget for future years.

The association has not established a particular budget for sustainability works to date. The cost of the various measures within new schemes have been incorporated within the individual project feasibilities and those works that have been undertaken for existing properties have been funded through the normal asset management budgets. The office cost measures have been incorporated within the normal overhead budgets. Looking forward, once we have detailed property information, it will be possible to assess the cost of particular environmental improvement measures. It is intended that the correct level of investment is considered in detail once that information is to hand in March 2011. In the meantime the association will continue to pursue project based funding for individual initiatives as and when it becomes available.

5. Governance structure to ensure delivery and Review of Strategy

The Director of Asset Management will be the lead Executive responsible for delivery of the strategy and an Internal Officer Group will continue and lead on implementation of the strategy.

Each department will be represented on the Internal Officer Group that will develop individual delivery plans within their department which will be cascaded down to individual objectives in work plans.

Delivery plans for each department will complement and work to achieve the key strategic aims of this strategy.

The action plan will be reviewed annually and will be presented annually to the Tenants Steering Group.

6. Summary

Although the association has done a substantial amount that can be categorised under the heading of “sustainability” we have not been sufficiently structured about it to enable us to really assess how we are doing. This document sets out the proposed approach which will bring more rigour to the analysis and the collection of data while continuing with the various projects that are going on.

Appendix 1 – Action Plan

Table 1: 3-year Action Plan commencing 2009/10 – Understanding and learning

Reference	Action	Impact	Benefit to Residents	Ownership	Date	Completion
S1	Secure SHIFT membership and complete assessment	Medium	Demonstrates achievements and plans for improvements	Director of Asset Management	31/01/10	
S2	Gather baseline data for PI targets	High	Baseline targets needed to drive improvements	Director of Asset Management	31/01/10	
S3	Agree actions from SHIFT improvement programme	High	Demonstrates achievements and plans for improvements	Director of Asset Management	30/09/10	
S4	Internal Officer Group review meeting	High	Demonstrates top level management commitment	Director of Asset Management	30/06/10	
S5	Review overall strategy	High	Demonstrates achievements and plans for improvements	Director of Asset Management	01/12/10	
S6	Revise induction process to include 'Sustainability at Octavia' section	Medium	Staff confident and able to talk knowledgeably to residents on Octavia's strategy	HR Manager	30/03/10	
S7	Review staff handbook to include section on 'Sustainability at Octavia'	Medium	Staff confident and able to talk knowledgeably to residents on Octavia's strategy	HR Manager	30/09/10	
S8	Obtain data on office and communal energy consumption for last three years.	Medium	Needed to set reduction targets	Building Services and Energy Manager	30/06/10	

Octavia Housing Environmental Strategy

Reference	Action	Impact	Benefit to Residents	Ownership	Date	Completion
S9	Discover current carbon foot print to enable improvement target to be set.	Medium	Demonstrates good management	Director of Asset Management	31/03/12	
S10	All assets assessed against ability to withstand climate change effects.	Medium	Protection of residents	Director of Asset Management	31/03/10	
S11	Recalculate SAP average to include new data and new properties	High	Accurate base data to inform programme	Building Services and Energy Manager	01/01/10	
S12	Carry out EcoHomes XB initial assessment on housing stock	Medium	Focussed funding on properties in most need, and tracked progress. Baseline set	Director of Asset Management	31/09/10	

Table 2: 3-year Action Plan commencing 2009/10 – Protecting and improving our stock

Reference	Action	Impact	Benefit to Residents	Ownership	Date	Completion
S13	Programme to achieve SAP target	High	Affordable warmth	Director of Asset Management	31/03/11	
S14	Continue programmes of energy efficiency and insulation measures	High	Affordable warmth	Director of Asset Management	Ongoing with annual review	
S15	Implement the 'Halving Waste to Landfill' charter initiative signed up to in 2009	Medium	More efficient use of materials and reduced waste and costs	Director of Asset Management	31/03/10	

Octavia Housing Environmental Strategy

Reference	Action	Impact	Benefit to Residents	Ownership	Date	Completion
S16	Revise Procurement Strategy	Medium	Use of environment friendly materials in communal areas by contractors and Octavia Housing	Director of Finance	31/03/11	
S17	Review environmental policy requirements from contractors	Medium	Consistency of service and approach	Director of Asset Management and Development	31/03/11	
S18	Programme include plans to build at least one project to Code Level 5 or 6 , or to Passivhaus by 2011	Medium	Direct benefit to new tenants.	Director of Development	31/03/11	

Table 3: 3-year Action Plan commencing 2009/10 – Reducing our environmental impact

Reference	Action	Impact	Benefit to Residents	Ownership	Date	Completion
S19	Agree overall strategy	High	Understanding and awareness of aims and objectives	Director of Asset Management	01/12/09	
S20	Agree action plan with tenant panel and report to TSG	High	Tenants and leaseholders involved and committed	Director of Asset Management	31/01/10	
S21	Publish strategy	Medium	Understanding and awareness of aims and objectives	Director of Asset Management	31/02/10	
S22	Develop departmental strategies	High	Demonstrates achievements and plans for improvements	Departmental Managers	30/09/10	
S23	Individual targets agreed	High		Departmental	30/03/10	

Octavia Housing Environmental Strategy

Reference	Action	Impact	Benefit to Residents	Ownership	Date	Completion
	as part of staff development			Managers		
S24	Obtain DEC energy certificate for Emily House	Medium	Demonstrates good management	Building Services and Energy Manager	30/03/10	
S25	Implement system for staff and residents to feed suggestions to Internal Officer Group	High	Residents views heard and valued	Director of Asset Management	30/06/10	
S26	Develop environmental impact plan for offices	Medium	Reduced overhead costs directly affect rent affordability	HR Manager	30/09/10	
S27	Energy consumption cut by 5% from 08/09 level	Medium	Reduced overhead costs directly affect rent affordability	Director of Asset Management	30/09/11	
S28	Customer facing staff trained to give basic energy advice	High	Direct benefit to reduce fuel poverty	Director of Asset Management/HR Manager	30/09/10	
S29	Continue to encourage tenants to recycle by providing facilities and advice	Medium	Work already in progress and supported by tenants	Director of Asset Management	ongoing	
S30	Promotion campaign to residents	High	Resident buy-in to policy and involvement	Director of Asset Management	ongoing	

Octavia Housing Environmental Strategy

Table 4: Long term aspirational – Strategic

Reference	Action	Impact	Benefit to residents	Ownership	Date	Completion
S31	Octavia Housing is a carbon neutral business.	High	Wide environmental benefits	Director of Asset Management	31/12/14	
S32	Continue to work with, and support the work of Local Authority energy saving initiatives	High	More resources to make a bigger impact	Director of Asset Management	Ongoing	
S33	Achievement of 'Gold' SHIFT status	Medium	Confidence in organisation and lower overheads	Director of Asset Management	31/12/15	
S34	All assets assessed against ability to withstand climate change effects, specifications adapted to mitigate.	High	Security and comfort	Director of Asset Management	31/12/15	

Appendix 2 – Performance Indicators

Performance Indicators that contribute to objectives	Target	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
<i>Existing Properties</i>					
Number of tenants in fuel poverty	Baseline needed	Interim targets to be agreed			
Number of dwellings subject to energy survey	100.00%				
Number of dwellings for which energy ratings have been calculated	100.00%				
Average energy rating for the housing stock	72	63			
Minimum energy rating for the housing stock	50	5			
Number of uninsulated cavity walls	Baseline needed	To be agreed			
Number of external uninsulated solid walls	Baseline needed	To be agreed			
Number of lofts with less than the minimum standard of insulation	Baseline needed	To be agreed			
Number of new heating systems installed	tba	527			
Number of properties to receive EcoHomesXB assessment	100%	To be agreed			

Octavia Housing Environmental Strategy

Number of properties to achieve EcoHomes benchmark	Benchmark target to be set following assessment				
Number of tenant households that have received energy advice	0.00%	To be agreed			
Amount of external funding secured for energy efficiency work	tba	To be agreed			
Climate change mitigation assessments carried out on existing stock	100%	To be agreed			

Octavia Housing Environmental Strategy

Performance Indicator	Target	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
<i>New Properties</i>					
All developments on brownfield sites	100%	100%			
Developments designed to Sustainable Homes Code level 4 or above	100%	100%			
Climate change mitigation assessments carried out on new developments	100%				
Green travel plans in place	100%	100%			
Incoming tenants advised of energy saving measures and their use.	100%				

Performance Indicator	Target	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
<i>Offices</i>					
Number of staff who have received energy training	To be agreed	tba			
Reduce energy consumption -	5%	tba			
Gas	5%	tba			
Electricity	5%	tba			
Water	5%	tba			
Reduce waste	10%				

