



Designing Tomorrow's Homes
Sustainability Strategy

Sustainability Strategy

- 1.1 The e² Development Consortium has a commitment to make sure that all of its new and refurbished developments are sustainable.
- 1.2 By the term sustainable we mean that they improve people's quality of life, socially and economically, both now and in the future, that they preserve natural resources and do not damage the environment.
- 1.3 A sustainable development can be defined as

"a development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (Brundtland Commission)
- 1.4 What is clear is that a sustainable development and a sustainable community are not mutually exclusive; you cannot have one without the other. Therefore a broad Sustainable Development Strategy should also encapsulate existing communities and existing housing stock.
- 1.5 This strategy covers four key elements of sustainable development principles.
 1. Social Sustainability
 2. Environmental Sustainability
 3. Economic Sustainability
 4. Organisational Sustainability

2 Social Sustainability

- 2.1 Developments will only take place where people will want to live, both now and in the future. In the case of redevelopment and refurbishment, our projects will seek to improve the local area so that residents want to stay there.
- 2.2 This will be achieved by using the Housing Corporation's Toolkit of Indicators of Sustainable Communities, close liaison with local authority strategic partners and an analysis of our own housing needs and estate management information.
- 2.3 Essential services and facilities should be easily accessible by foot and public transport for the convenience of all residents and to reduce the use of the car.

- 2.4 The Consortium recognises, however, that in some rural areas of East Anglia a community might be sustainable, and in fact need more affordable housing to remain sustainable, whilst not having easy access to all desirable local services. In these instances we will look at a group of local parishes being able to provide the required range of services between them rather than requiring all services to be based in a single parish in order to be deemed sustainable for local housing development.
- 2.5 Where new development is taking place within an existing community the design of the scheme should ensure that it will improve or add to the quality of the existing environment making it a more desirable place to live.
- 2.6 Developments should support a mix of building uses and tenure types that appropriately reflect the local community.
- 2.7 e² will work with our local authority partners to devise ways of dealing with the inter-related problems of unemployment, crime, poor health, housing, education and degraded surroundings.
- 2.8 All new development will improve the quality, design and layout of any housing being refurbished and provide high standards in the quality, design and layout of new housing.
- 2.9 When designing developments consideration will be given to activities which may help to make the development more sustainable. These may include providing allotments, woodland or wildlife areas or providing sources of renewable energy.
- 2.10 Developments will incorporate good design principles following CABE's Building for Life Criteria, ensuring that the spaces in between the buildings are designed as carefully as the houses creating identifiable spaces of high quality that connect with the area around them.

3 Environmental Sustainability

- 3.1 The Consortium members will ensure their stock is well-maintained, with an efficient on-going cyclical maintenance programme.
- 3.2 They will seek to adopt and implement Eco Homes XB across their existing housing stock and set targets for improvements against a Consortium wide benchmark.
- 3.3 All new homes built by the Consortium will achieve Level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes from 2008, with 10% of their programme in 2008/09 exceeding this standard, and 20% from 2009/10 onwards.

3.4 The aim for all developments will be to improve the landscape, ecology and biodiversity of sites. This will protect existing areas of high quality landscape, or existing valuable ecologies and promote biodiversity through considerate design.

3.5 At the design stage and through the life of the new developments and on refurbishment projects to our existing stock ways in which reductions can be made in the following will be considered:

- Car usage
- Noise Pollution
- Water usage
- Air pollution
- Domestic waste
- Construction waste
- Energy consumption
- Water Usage

3.6 Options for offsetting the carbon used in the development of our homes will also be a factor.

3.7 The Consortium recognises that key to ensuring on going environmental sustainability is ensuring that both our own staff and our customers are provided with information and education on environmental matters.

3.8 Help will be given to tenants of new properties to understand some of the technologies by providing training, holding workshops and encouraging them to join focus groups.

4 Economic Sustainability

4.1 The Consortium aims to ensure that the cost of housing remains at an affordable level for its customers.

4.2 This means that all general needs rented properties will be set within Housing Corporation target rent setting policy levels.

4.3 For other products such as New Build Home Buy market monitoring and local income levels will aim to ensure that residents pay no more than one third of their gross income on housing costs.

- 4.4 It is important that the running costs of homes also remain affordable and to this end our developments will make the most of opportunities to save energy by using energy efficient building types, forms and layouts.
- 4.5 We will continue to investigate energy from renewable sources, such as the sun, or wind to reduce energy bills for our customers and actively work to install “smart” meters into new properties so the consumer can see the actual cost of the energy they use and take steps to mitigate it.
- 4.6 To help create and maintain a balanced local economy and community e² will promote developments with mixed tenure and mixed unit types and sizes, including units designed specifically for people with disabilities, appropriate to their locations and local housing needs, to encourage residents to stay within the community.

5 Organisational Sustainability

- 5.1 The members of e² are committed to introducing sustainable principles to the manner in which they operate their businesses and use their office buildings.
- 5.2 Members, with the help of the Carbon Trust, will carry out an audit of the Associations offices with the aim of reducing energy usage and carbon emissions.
- 5.3 This audit will help the individual consortium members to set out their own organisation action plan.
- 5.4 As well as the Action Plan generated by the Carbon Trust Audit the following areas will be examined and fed into the action plan.
- Travel to work patterns and incentives for car sharing
 - Purchasing and Procurement policies focusing on sourcing only products from sustainable sources and “A” rated appliances.
 - The installation of “Smart” metering to offices and possibly other landlord controlled areas.
 - Reduction of waste and an increase in recycling.
 - Use of recycled goods such as paper as standard across the organisation.

- A reduction in the amount of printed paper and not electronically stored.
- An examination of working patterns and arrangements which may enable more remote working to be accommodated.

5.5 It is recognised by members of e² that it is important that there is full integration of Sustainable Development principles throughout the organisation and across all business areas.

6 The Next Step

6.1 Each individual member of e² will produce their own Action Plan setting out what action is necessary to achieve the strategy's objectives.

6.2 These Action Plans will allocate a timeframe to tasks and resources required.

6.3 The performance of this strategy will be measured using a mixture of Key Performance Indicators and Eco Homes XB for existing housing stock and by Housing Quality Indicators (HQI's) and The Code for Sustainable Homes for new build developments.

6.4 The e² Development Team will provide each Consortium Member with an HQI analysis for each new development and certification relating to the Code for Sustainable homes.

7.0 Reporting and Review

7.1 This strategy will be reviewed annually by the Joint members Group of e².

7.2 There is growing emphasis and pressure to report publicly on an Associations progress towards environmental improvements and consideration should be given as to whether there will be a need in the future to comply with the obligations under the Environmental Information Regulations 2005 and report publicly on the environmental reporting website EcoReports (www.ecoreports.co.uk)