

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY

2018-2023



OVERVIEW

“The need of quiet, the need of air, the need of exercise... the sight of the sky and of things growing seem human needs common to all”

These are the words of our founder, Octavia Hill, co-founder of the National Trust and one of the first campaigners for the Clean Air Act which was eventually passed in 1956 - if she were alive today she could be called an environmentalist.

Sustainability means meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs; in other words, managing our resources and not using them at a faster rate than the earth can replenish them.

To reflect our mission to create Good Homes, Better Lives, our strategy focuses on two areas; buildings and people. It seeks to improve the fabric and operation of all our buildings; homes and offices. It aims to improve the health and wellbeing for all our people; residents and staff.

This strategy will cover the next five years; 2018-23 and Octavia will start consulting on a new strategy in 2022.

BACKGROUND

Octavia have a history of innovation in domestic energy efficiency. In 2010 we carried out the first certified Passiv Haus retrofit, 100 Princedale Road. This achievement is more impressive given the property is in a conservation zone. In 2013 we went on to build the first Passiv Haus certified social housing, Sulgrave Gardens. We took the learning from this project into our next scheme, Park Lodge and developed our fabric first approach that we take on all our land led projects.

In 2016 Octavia embarked on our Retrofit Programme, with the target to raise all our existing properties up to a C rated EPC by 2023. We do this through a mix of measures including; insulating solid external walls, replacing single glazing with double glazing where possible and fitting draught proofing to windows and external doors. This reflects our motto “Good Homes Better Lives”, continues our long term commitment to environmental sustainability and ensures we stay ahead of the Government’s Clean Green Growth Strategy target of EPC C by 2030 for all housing.

These energy efficiency works are undertaken as part of our cyclical maintenance works programme. We still have 1527 properties rated below EPC C; of these approximately 1100 require external wall insulation (EWI) and 400 require other works such as new, more efficient night storage heaters or boilers. Last financial year we installed EWI at 15 properties. Under our current programme of works we are installing EWI on a further 80 properties.

Octavia are already sector leaders for energy efficiency, this was recognised last year when we were named Sustainable Housing Provider of the year at the 2017 SHIFT awards. Octavia currently have a Silver accreditation as assessed under the SHIFT sustainability standard for the social housing sector. However to achieve a Gold accreditation Octavia need to address wider sustainability issues such as water use, biodiversity, sustainable procurement and the health and wellbeing of our residents and staff.

OUR APPROACH TO SUSTAINABILITY

We take a holistic approach to sustainability:

- We take a long term view on our investment; making decisions based on lifecycle costs as demonstrated by the approach taken in our Property Strategy.
- We integrate sustainability across our organisation into our normal way of working. An example of this would be our retrofit programme. This is part of our capital works cyclical programme and is delivered by a Project Manager in Asset Management. The energy works have been fully integrated to our cyclical programme. Our new environmental sustainability strategy will reflect this approach with the responsibility for each deliverable given to the appropriate role within the organisation with the Sustainability and Energy Manager monitoring progress.
- We take a joined up approach to growing our property portfolio with close working of our Asset Management and Development teams with common executive oversight from the Property Board. This is facilitated by the Gateway process.
- We consider affordability for both residents and Octavia. This is demonstrated through our fabric first approach to all our land led new build schemes. It is also reflected the joint working of Asset Management and Development to ensure the schemes we build are cost effective to maintain. This contributes to the financial sustainability of the organisation.
- We consider the impact on the wider environment and the community we work in. This is illustrated by our commitment to go above and beyond simple compliance with new building regulations, with the PV array on our office and our willingness to trial innovative solutions such as our Passiv Haus schemes and the use of a data analytics platform to improve heat network efficiencies.

OUR OBJECTIVES FOR 2018-23

We have aligned our strategy priorities with our ambition to create “Good Homes Better Lives”. Our property assets include, housing, communal heat networks, offices and extra care facilities. We have included the priorities for all our property assets under the heading of Good Homes. Priorities that improve the health and wellbeing of our staff and residents are under the heading Better Lives.

This strategy has been designed to deliver our aspiration of a Gold accreditation under the SHIFT sustainability standard.

GOOD HOMES

Existing buildings

- SAP 69 on all properties by 2023
- Reduce communal electricity usage by 15% by 2023
- Monitor and improve performance of heat networks with an aspiration to 60% efficiency
- Reduce water use to 140l/person/day by 2023
- Target 50% responsibly sourced cleaning products by our estates team
- Target 30% responsibly sourced grounds products for grounds maintenance
- Target a SHIFT natural capital score of 25% by 2023
- Install EV charging points where requested

New build

- Launch Octavia Soft Landings in 2019
- Target a 75% diversion from landfill from Octavia led schemes

Workplaces

- Reduce carbon emissions to 50kg/m²/yr by 2023
- Target waste of 15kg/employee by 2023
- Target water use of 8m³/employee by 2023
- Target 60% responsible sourcing of office consumables by 2023
- No single use plastics

BETTER LIVES

Residents

- Improve internal air quality
- Achieve 30% direct contacts with residents on energy efficiency
- Assess and address overheating in new build and existing properties

Staff

- Improve Health & wellbeing
- Improve staff awareness of environmental sustainability issues