



## **Environmental and Sustainability Strategy 2010-2012**

### **1.0 Background**

1.1 The Earth's climate is changing. Rising global temperatures will bring changes in weather patterns, rising sea levels and increased frequency and intensity of extreme weather. Atmospheric concentrations of CO<sub>2</sub> and methane have more than doubled since the industrial revolution and the acidity of the oceans has gone up by 30%. Arctic sea ice cover has decreased by over 30% since the 1970s; sea levels around the UK have increased by 10cm during the 20th Century; and in 160 years of records, the 10 hottest years have all been since 1997.

1.2 The Climate Change Act 2008 set in law a long-term target to reduce the UK's emissions to 80% below 1990 levels by 2050, and established the system of UK carbon budgets. Nationally, housing accounts for 27% of carbon dioxide emissions. The TSA has already proposed a Warm Homes Standard for social landlords that would set the standard for thermal efficiency in social housing. Initial estimates to retro fit existing social housing are in the region of £60bn. At some stage a Warm Homes Standard or equivalent will be introduced and social housing providers will have a regulatory obligation to meet the standard as happened with the Decent Homes Standard.

### **2.0 Strategy Statement**

2.1 As a provider of social housing, related support services and employment St.Martins has a responsibility to promote environmental sustainability within the buildings we own and manage, and to demonstrate our commitment to achieving environmental best practice. In this respect we actively support the Government and Tenant Services Authority's objectives in improving environmental standards.

2.2 St Martins recognises that many of its activities have the potential to negatively impact on the environment and we aim to reduce this impact through the actions outlined in this strategy. We will take environmental sustainability into account in the decisions we make, reducing waste and energy consumption, and increasing our use of recycling.

2.3 We will take into account environmental factors in maintaining, refurbishing and increasing the energy efficiency of our existing properties, as well as in the planning, designing and building of new homes.

2.4 We aim to actively reduce the environmental impact of our work through the provision of energy efficient homes and offices.

2.5 We will ensure that all of our staff understand our strategy and encourage them to promote environmental sustainability throughout their work.

### **3.0 Current sustainability arrangements**

3.1 There are arrangements in place with *Paper Round* in all projects to re-cycle paper and cardboard.

3.2 We use email communication wherever possible and an organisational intranet system will shortly be in place to further reduce the quantity of paper and photocopying used.

3.3 We recycle toner cartridges, and retain and re-use furniture and equipment.

3.4 St Martins encourages its employees to use public transport or to cycle. Season ticket loans are available to employees and St Martins subscribes to the *Cycle to Work* scheme.

## **4.0 Energy costs**

4.1 During 2009/10 St Martins spent £84,417 on gas and electricity. The spend on Electricity was £ 39,361 and on gas it was £45,056. A reduction in the cost of energy use of 50% would save in the region of £42, 000 pa.

4.2 We have identified that Wilton Villas, New North Road and Ferrini House consume approximately 57% of the total energy spend : 61% of the spend on gas and 53% on electricity. Wilton Villas, New North Road and Ferrini House account for only 38% of the units of accommodation in St Martins.

4.3 The high disproportionate spend in these projects is a result of a number of factors:

- They are older buildings built long before the introduction of any environmental standards.
- Their windows and doors are either single or partially double-glazed.
- The buildings have older inefficient boilers and inadequate controls.
- None of the radiators have thermostatic controls (TRVs).
- There are no controls or timers for communal lighting, which therefore tends to be left on constantly.

## **5.0 Strategy**

5.1 St Martins has finite resources and we must therefore ensure that we target our resources in a way which delivers maximum impact.

5.2 In order to achieve the overall 50% energy reduction target we will need to focus on reducing gas and electricity consumption, specifically in those older buildings noted in 4.2, and invest in measures to improve their thermal efficiency and reduce their energy consumption.

5.3 The majority of St Martins' properties are built to current building regulations and therefore have a high level of thermal efficiency. This strategy focuses on those projects that have been identified as being the most energy and thermally inefficient in order to achieve a 50% reduction in energy use by 2012.

5.4 Our target is ambitious and challenging but can be achieved if we adopt a dual approach to reducing our energy consumption

5.5 Educate staff and users to reduce their consumption of energy by turning off lights and appliances. 17% of electricity use in the average home is used by appliances on stand-by.

5.6 Invest in upgrading the thermal and energy efficiency of identified schemes.

## **8.0 Measurement, monitoring and reporting**

8.1 We expect to see a 25% saving on energy costs by April 2011 and a further 25% reduction by April 2012.

8.2 A progress report on the Environmental and Sustainability strategy will be presented to the Board annually.

8.3 A progress report on this strategy will be presented to the JNC and the Staff Council every six months.