



Environmental Policy

Date of Board Approval: 8th June 2022

Version: 1

Effective date: 8th June 2022

Last Reviewed: 8th June 2022

Review date: 8th June 2024



Introduction

Empower Housing Association (EHA) is committed to continual improvement and enhanced environmental performance, always identifying ways to reduce pollution. The scale of our activities means that our environmental impact is significant, and we want to minimise it. This policy is intended to provide a framework for the setting and reviewing of environmental objectives and targets which form part of EHA.

EHA recognises that climate change and extreme weather events, such as floods and heat waves, are a potential risk to our homes, our tenants and our operations. We also recognise that more sustainable homes mean lower tenant utility bills, lower emissions and better lifestyles.

The policy will be communicated to all employees, contractors working for and on behalf of the Association, tenants and stakeholders and will be made available to the public.

Policy Statement

EHA want to protect the environment and to prevent pollution, we are committed to saving energy, reducing waste, to the protection of the environment, protecting wildlife/biodiversity, preventing pollution, and cutting the amount of carbon and other emissions generated by our operations, our staff and tenants, the homes that we let and our offices. The Board and Senior Management are committed to this Policy.

Environmental Commitments:

EHA have identified the following impacts which result from its service and operations:

- To minimise the amount of waste we produce and facilitate recycling across our properties and offices
- To encourage staff and tenants to reduce energy emissions through education on energy-saving practices and choosing sustainable sources/suppliers
- To minimise staff car travel by promoting sustainable transport options, facilitating working from home and online meetings where appropriate
- To procure sustainable products, materials and contractor services

- To promote a positive environmental culture to all staff, tenants and partners through available media resources

Asset management

In our homes we have some control over the type and efficiency of components such as boilers, the amount of insulation and the specification of windows. By investing in improvements to these items we also help to reduce our tenants' energy bills and hopefully encourage a warm and healthy home in colder months.

Our focus is to develop excellent, energy efficient homes to help meet the demand, to improve our worst performing homes and to deliver quality replacement programmes.

Promotion

This policy will be communicated to all persons working for and on behalf of the Association and will be made available to the public via EHA's website.

EHA aims to share relevant 'eco tips' with tenants and their support teams regularly via website posts, our newsletter or specific communications to a household and we will proactively support relevant theme days throughout the year e.g. Earth Day to help raise awareness of and show our support for environmental issues and causes.

Responsibility

The designated officer responsible for implementation and monitoring of this policy will be the Chief Executive.

APPENDIX 1 – Environmental notes for EHA staff

Driving:

- Have you grouped together visits/meetings that make sense geographically to save on mileage (and time)?
- When arranging a meeting, consider if it is necessary to travel, or could the meeting take place either over the phone or via video conferencing? Could anyone car-share to the meeting?
- If you're going out or home for lunch, can you walk rather than drive or can multiple people go in one car if further away?

Recycling:

- Can we repair or repurpose something rather than replace it e.g., phone or laptop with a fault? Or donate/sell unused items for re-use elsewhere
- Are we recycling everything we can in the office? This includes rubbish, printer cartridges, furniture etc. and reusing banners, Christmas decorations etc.
- Have properties got provision to recycle standard kerbside items e.g., bins free or provided?
- Can old furniture in properties be donated/recycled?

Resources:

- When printing a document, consider if it is necessary. Are you able to work with the document on your screen rather than printing it off for reference? Could you just print off the pages you need rather than the full document? Can you print 2-sided to save paper?
- Once you're finished with something consider if anyone else may wish to use it or if you could use blank sides for notes

- Are you using necessary energy in the office e.g., heating, lighting, only boiling as much water as you need etc? Have you turned off sockets when not in use, especially before you leave for a meeting or at the end of the day?
- Consider % renewable energy when selecting a supplier for void/office premises
- Do you have time to delete some old/sent emails, or could we set a timeframe after which they are automatically deleted? (Storage uses energy)