



NORTHAMPTON
PARTNERSHIP HOMES

Sustainability Strategy 2020-23

30 October 2020

1. Introduction

Sustainable development aims to meet current needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet theirs. It protects the natural world from degradation and over exploitation, aims to end poverty and social inequality, and to develop economic prosperity in harmony with nature. The aims of this strategy are significant not just to NPH and our customers, it is to ensure future generations can live in a world with the same or better opportunities as we do today. Each of our residents, employees, suppliers and stakeholders has a crucial role in our sustainability objectives and as an organisation we endeavour to operate responsibly in a changing world.

Delivering the aims and ambitions of this strategy will represent huge progress for a young organisation, but at the same time feels like we are only scratching the surface. We want to build enduring relationships and successful partnerships with our customers, our supply chain and local government. There is enormous work that needs to be done throughout this decade and beyond to preserve the environment for future generations, and we see this as just the beginning.

The Sustainability Strategy 2020-23 has been developed in accordance with the vision, mission and values of NPH as laid out in the Corporate Plan.

Our Vision

NPH provides homes which enable people to live happy and healthy lives in enriched communities.

Our Mission:

- We improve lives by sharing a common purpose
- We improve and maintain the quality of our homes
- We provide services which endeavour to meet the needs and aspirations of all tenants and residents
- People can influence immediate and long term futures for themselves and their communities

Our Values:

- Open and Strong
- Listen and Respond
- Achieving more with others
- Aim High and Deliver

2. National and local context

- 2.1. NPH is a key business in Northampton and has a major contribution to make locally and regionally and within the new Unitary Authority from April 2021. We manage approximately 12,000 homes in Northampton, housing more than 10% of the local population. We are ambitious about the opportunity this represents to inspire our residents, employees, suppliers and stakeholders, and to play a key role in sustainable development of the region including mitigation and adaptation to climate change.

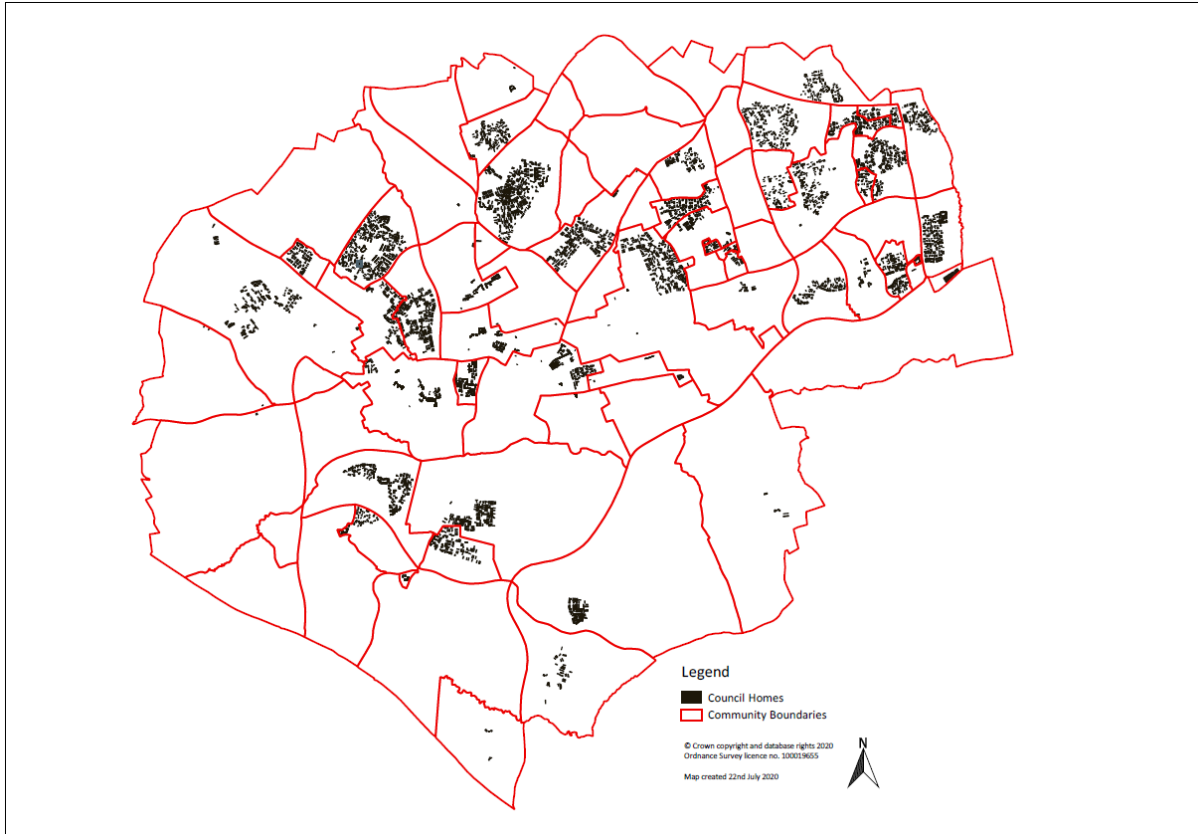


Figure 1; Map of NPH housing stock

- 2.2. **Central government legislation** both mandates and supports action on sustainable development. The 25-year Environment Plan, published by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) in 2018, commits the UK government to champion sustainable development and achieve clean growth. The aims are to deliver cleaner air and water, and tackle growing problems such as waste, soil degradation and climate change.

The Climate Change Act of 2008 formally commits the UK to achieve *net zero carbon emissions by 2050*, suggesting a 93% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions is necessary with the remainder being offset, mainly through large scale afforestation. According to the Committee on Climate Change, the UK is currently an international leader in climate change having reduced emissions to 44% below 1990 levels by 2018.

- 2.3. **A climate emergency** was declared during the summer of 2019 by both Northampton Borough Council and Northamptonshire County Council, setting the ambitious target for Northampton to achieve *net zero carbon emissions by 2030*.

The Northamptonshire Climate Change Strategy 2020-23 highlights the following major risks that climate change represents to the region:

- Increased flooding;
 - Impacted health and wellbeing and reduced productivity due to high temperatures;
 - Shortages of water and energy supply;
 - Damage to natural capital, ecosystems and biodiversity;
 - Disrupted food production and trade; and
 - New and emerging pests and diseases, and invasive and non-invasive species, affecting people, plants and animals.
- 2.4. **The new West Northamptonshire unitary council** will be in place from April 2021 and will become our parent council. NPH has to date operated within the boundaries of NBC, which is one of eight local councils within Northamptonshire. NPH has a strong and positive relationship with NBC, and we look forward to not only continuing this relationship with the new authority in the coming years but developing further to enable the creation of new initiatives and opportunities. NPH has ambition to be the delivery partner of choice for affordable housing in West Northamptonshire, and we are well placed to support the new West Northamptonshire unitary council to achieve its housing aspirations and sustainable development in the region.

3. Fuel poverty

Sustainability and fuel poverty are intrinsically linked. Approximately 10% of Northampton's households are in fuel poverty and we operate in some of the worst affected areas. Whilst we have continually worked to alleviate fuel poverty in our communities, rising energy prices and continual challenges around employment and changes to benefits mean this is an ongoing issue. To address fuel poverty we will provide homes with reduced energy costs and improved comfort, whilst providing opportunities and support for households to increase financial security and prosperity.

Through a programme of planned investment and building new homes we are providing our customers access to safe, secure and affordable housing, and the platform to lift themselves above the poverty line. We will use our asset management systems to monitor and record RdSAP data sets of our housing, enabling modelling of energy efficiency improvements to be integrated into our asset management and development strategies over the short, medium and long term. All NPH housing will achieve EPC band C by 2030 as a minimum, and we will plan to achieve zero carbon housing standards by 2050.

Improved sustainability of local communities will provide numerous economic and social benefits to Northampton. We will look to develop new and existing partnerships with local agencies and organisations working on fuel poverty to provide additional support to our customers where it is needed.

4. Sustainability vision

This strategy aims to find the right balance of environmental, social and economic objectives and considers this in terms of the three P's; people, planet and prosperity.

People – To enable our residents to live free from all forms of poverty, in a healthy environment where they can fulfil their potential in dignity and equality.

Planet – To protect the planet from degradation and over-exploitation, to enhance biodiversity, to reduce our ecological footprint, and to take action on climate change.

Prosperity – To empower our residents to live fulfilling and prosperous lives, and for theirs and our development to be in harmony with nature.

The long-term vision is to provide homes which enable people to live happy and healthy lives in enriched communities within the means of our planet.



Figure 2: People, planet and prosperity – The Three P's of the UN's 2030 Agenda

5. The One Planet Living Framework

At NPH, we believe that each of our residents, employees, suppliers and stakeholders has a crucial role in creating a sustainable future for West Northamptonshire. To help us become a more sustainable organisation we have adopted the One Planet Living framework, developed by Bioregional¹, which is based on the ten simple principles below.

¹ <https://www.bioregional.com/one-planet-living>

	Health and happiness	Encouraging active, social, meaningful lives to promote good health and wellbeing
	Equity and local economy	Creating safe, equitable places to live and work which support local prosperity and international fair trade
	Culture and community	Nurturing local identity and heritage, empowering communities and promoting a culture of sustainable living
	Land and nature	Protecting and restoring land for the benefit of people and wildlife
	Sustainable water	Using water efficiently, protecting local water resources and reducing flooding and drought
	Local and sustainable food	Promoting sustainable humane farming and healthy diets high in local, seasonal organic food and vegetable protein
	Travel and transport	Reducing the need to travel, encouraging walking, cycling and low carbon transport
	Materials and products	Using materials from sustainable sources and promoting products which help people reduce consumption.
	Zero waste	Reducing consumption, re-using and recycling to achieve zero waste and zero pollution
	Zero carbon energy	Making buildings and manufacturing energy efficient and supplying all energy with renewables

Figure 3: The One Planet Living Framework

If everyone on the planet lived as we do in the UK, we would need three planets to produce and absorb the natural resources consumed. The concept of One Planet Living works towards the ideal that we must reduce our ecological footprint to within the means of our planet - it is the only one we have!

We will use the framework to co-create a One Planet Action Plan, with consideration for each of the ten principles. Multiple stakeholders will be given the opportunity to contribute and to take ownership and responsibility for the sustainability issues which mean most to them. This will be a fluid plan, with flexibility to capitalise on opportunities as they emerge.

Flexible and robust action planning for sustainability will help NPH to:

- Increase efficiency of service provision, saving money and reducing resource consumption;
- Increase resilience to changing key environmental, social and economic challenges, future proofing our services;
- Manage risk by anticipating and adapting to future trends and changing demands;
- Monitor and report on key social and environmental aspects; and
- Engage stakeholders through effective communication of the NPH sustainability vision;

6. Strategic objectives

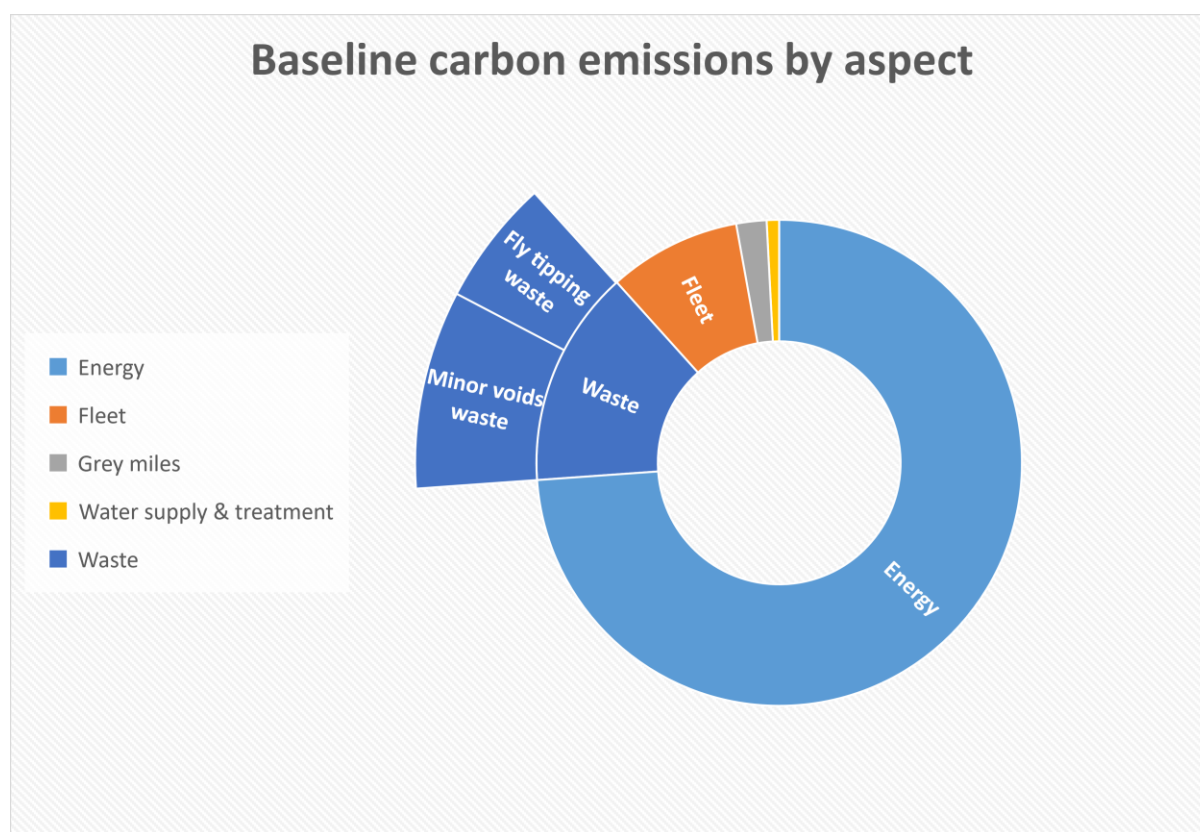
To achieve the aims of the sustainability vision our strategic objectives will be focused around three core themes:

- **Leading** by example by managing our environmental impact;
- **Inspiring** our residents, employees, suppliers and stakeholders; and
- **Influencing** during local government transformation and beyond.

6.1. Leading by example by managing our environmental impact

Our business has a significant environmental impact, whether it be from the energy to keep the office lights on, the fuel to drive our fleet, or the waste we collect as fly tipping. We will apply a systematic approach to environmental management, providing a consistent methodology for assessing organisational environmental aspects and carbon footprint.

The NPH baseline carbon footprint for the financial year 2018-19 was 2,474 tCO₂e. For the period of this strategy we will target continual reductions in carbon emissions of 7% per year, and a 20% reduction in the NPH carbon footprint by 2023, compared to the baseline. Key to achieving these aims will be decarbonisation of NPH energy requirements and improved energy efficiency and waste management. We will work to reduce gas consumption in our communal heating systems by improving heating system efficiency and implementing heat metering and monitoring where appropriate. We have committed to procure green electricity from October 2020. Carbon reduction targets will be reviewed in 2023.



Longer term targets will be established to plan a pathway for NPH to be carbon neutral by 2050 in line with UK government targets. Robust measurement of key environmental impacts will provide a baseline of data to inform decision making, enable clear and concise reporting to the Executive Management Team (EMT) and our parent council, and support compliance with statutory obligations.

Going forward we will:

- Formalise appropriate environmental policies with commitment from EMT;
- Apply systematic monitoring and targeting of key environmental impacts striving for continual improvement of environmental performance to achieve the objectives of the relevant environmental policies;
- Report results in accordance with EMT requirements and statutory obligations;
- Adopt central government climate change targets as our minimum standard, planning to be a carbon neutral organisation by 2050;
- Support the aims and ambitions of the local authority on sustainable development and climate change targets; and
- Be fully engaged with the Strategic Local Plan for West Northamptonshire and the integrated housing strategy, as well as the new Local Plan for Northampton and the Northampton Town Masterplan;

6.2. Inspiring our residents, employees, suppliers and stakeholders

The One Planet Living framework will be used to inspire and engage residents, staff and stakeholders to co-create an action plan focusing on the sustainability issues which matter most to them. The ten principles will provide the platform to develop a vision for the future, focusing on community needs, embedding a culture of sustainability at NPH, balancing our environmental, social and economic priorities.

A range of community engagement activities will facilitate co-creation and innovation by our residents, staff and stakeholders, leading to development of a One Planet Action Plan. Following the One Planet Living methodology of establishing outcomes, actions and indicators, the action plan will represent a joint vision of sustainability at NPH and set a pathway to realise this ambition. The One Planet Action Plan will be published on <https://oneplanet.com/> alongside the numerous other action plans worldwide.

Going forward we will:

- Engage with residents, employees and stakeholders to co-create an action plan and vision for the future, establishing comprehensive outcomes, actions and indicators for each principle;
- Establish 'Principle Champions', individuals who can champion a specific One Planet Living principle;
- Ensure appropriate commitment and resources are available to deliver the action plan; and
- Publish a 'One Planet Action Plan';

6.3. Influencing during local government transformation and beyond

We look forward to working with the new unitary authority and to the opportunities and challenges this will bring. We will work closely with our parent council to influence sustainable development of the local economy and support the development and delivery of the housing strategy objectives. We are committed to creating and establishing innovative housing solutions and, in conjunction with the aims of the NPH Development Strategy, we anticipate opportunities to build new homes in new areas with greater access to natural capital such as land for renewable energy generation, flood mitigation, and connections to local food systems.

As we expand our area of operation we will develop our use of information technology to model and understand the systemic opportunities and risks. We will use Geographic Information Systems (GIS), Building Information Modelling (BIM), and other relevant software to provide the platform for NPH to begin a shift towards a circular economy; making better use of local resources, reducing waste and pollution through effective design and planning, and challenging the way things have always been done. GIS offers a framework and process to analyse and model available environmental and demographic data to inform better planning and unlock the potential of our current and future position.

Going forward we will develop our use of technology such as GIS and BIM to gain a holistic understanding and visualisation of where we are now, where we are going, and how to monitor progress along the way.

Going forward we will develop an approach to applying the principles of circular economy; rethinking how we consider resources, challenging the way things have always been done, making the most of local resources, driving more efficient use of finite materials.

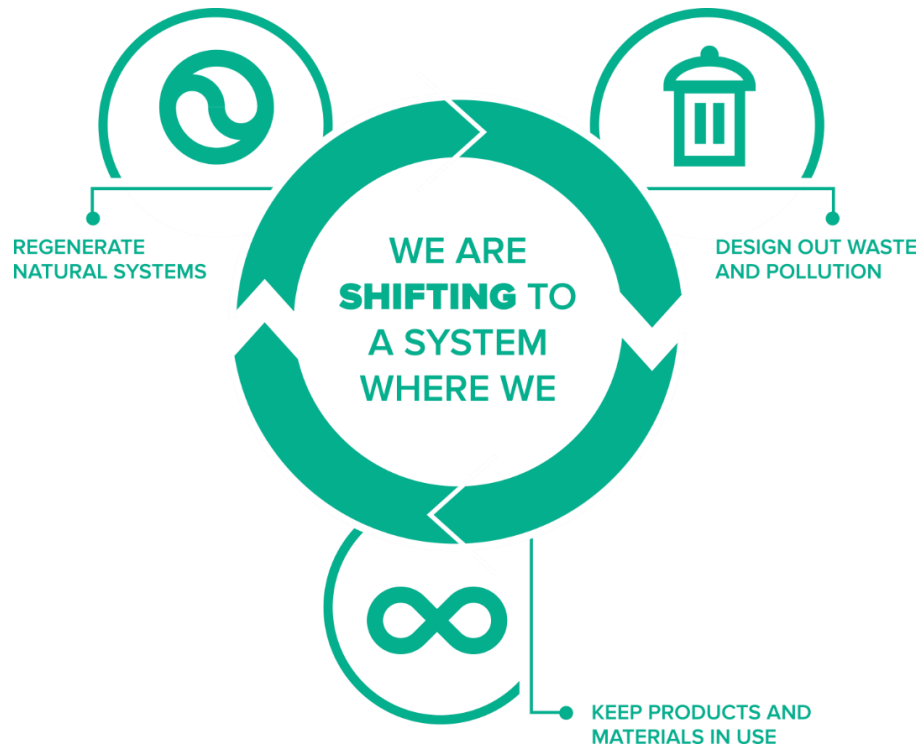


Figure 4: The circular economy vision and approach

7. Delivering the strategy

The Sustainability Strategy sets out our sustainability vision and objectives until 2023 and how we will achieve them. An action plan has been created following the One Planet Living Framework to enable delivery of the strategy and monitoring of progress. During this period, the strategy progress against objectives will be reviewed and reported to EMT on an annual basis, updating the action plan as necessary.