

Sustainability strategy

2025-2030



Great homes | Strong communities | Bright futures

Introduction

At South Liverpool Homes, we recognise our social, economic and environmental impact and our obligation to deliver sustainably-responsible homes and services to our customers and stakeholders.

We also recognise that we have a wider responsibility in our local communities and at a national and global level in delivering a sustainable, fairer future for all. We believe that all our future homes must be inclusive, enabling residents to easily access services that support their health, wellbeing and economic aspirations.

More importantly, we know these homes must also support the UK government's net-zero ambitions by ensuring they are cleaner, greener and more energy efficient. Our ambition is to deliver this with sound financial principles that maximise investment opportunities and promote a resilient community.

Our strategy ensures that our customers' challenges are considered in all our decisions, to mitigate climate change, alleviate fuel poverty, improve health and wellbeing and the real-world cost of living in one of our homes.

In developing our sustainability strategy, we have been guided by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (1), the UK Green House Gas Emission targets (2), recommendations from the Committee on Climate Change (3) and other academic climate and sustainability research (4). Decarbonising social housing is therefore critical to achieving the government's ambition of net-zero carbon emissions by 2050.

Following the UK Government climate emergency declaration in 2019, this strategy outlines our plans up to 2030, by focusing on carbon reduction, sustainable housing development, low-carbon transport and affordable warmth.



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1. <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

2. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/climate-change-explained#uk-government-action>

3. <https://www.theccc.org.uk/>

4. <https://tyndall.ac.uk/partners/university-manchester>

Our vision and strategic objectives



Our vision is to deliver great homes, strong communities and bright futures.

We will do this through four key objectives: People, Place, Planet and Pound.

People

Engaged and included residents who can access a range of services to support their health, wellbeing and economic aspirations. Colleagues who are engaged and empowered to deliver SLH's objectives.

Place

Building homes to meet current and future needs whilst investing in existing homes. Building strong communities – places where people choose to live and stay. A good quality home will be the foundation to tackling social inequality.

Planet

Preparing our business, our homes and our communities to meet net-zero carbon targets; going a step further by providing cleaner, greener neighbourhoods and helping our customers navigate the energy challenges they face.

Pound

Creating a sound financial platform to deliver our vision, maximising investment opportunities and working together with others to deliver more.



What does sustainability mean to us?

What do we know?

Climate change is an issue which affects us all. Building on existing legislation in 2019, the government introduced a UK target to reduce all greenhouse gas emissions to net zero before 2050 as a response to the global warming crisis.

The UK being a signatory to the Paris Agreement, publication of the Clean Growth Strategy and the announcement of the Future Homes new build standard all show commitment to tackling climate change, and the key role of social housing to support this commitment.

We know that UK homes contribute about a fifth of the greenhouse gas emissions recorded in the UK and decarbonisation of social homes will play an important role in the country's route to net zero. Domestic use of fossil fuels contributes about 21% of carbon emissions in England, with social housing contributing about 10% of this.

We know that reaching minimum energy efficiency standards has been recognised as a key action that would enable social housing providers to tackle wider issues of quality, including damp and mould issues, if adequate retrofit is implemented.

It has been recommended by the UK government that upgrading all social homes to reach a minimum standard of energy efficiency of EPC band C and moving all heating to less polluting alternatives would help to achieve net-zero.

Building new homes to higher environmental standards will form part of the solution to achieve the UK net-zero goals. Offsetting emissions will play a part in meeting the UK net-zero goals but not in decarbonising our homes.

As a key social housing provider within south Liverpool, we believe we have an obligation to work to reduce the impact our homes have and ensure they are healthy and affordable to live in, both now and in the future.

The sustainability strategy supports our 'Place' and 'Planet' strategies, the stated key objectives being:

Place

- Build 280 new homes
- Invest £52 million in existing homes
- Remodel our independent living schemes
- Create investment strategies for Speke and Garston

Planet

- Invest £1.25m to improve the energy efficiency of our homes
- Develop a five-year Sustainability Strategy
- Build new homes to achieve Energy Performance Rating A
- Unlock community potential by upskilling tenants to respond to net carbon zero skills requirements



South Liverpool Homes recognises that there are a range of substantial actions to be undertaken and this will be done by taking a strategic and planned approach. To be sure of the impact of our operations and facilities on the environment, we signed up for the Sustainable Homes Index for Tomorrow (SHIFT) assessment in 2021, highlighting our emission sources.

SHIFT is an independent assessment and accreditation scheme, provided by Suss Housing. It helps participating organisations show how they are meeting the challenging science-based environmental targets and demonstrating their environmental credentials to funders, partners and regulators alike. The outcome of this assessment can then be used to design strategies that would help monitor environmental performance and draw up plans for emission reduction and net-zero objectives. The assessment reveals our current environmental performance across the following areas:

- Our existing homes
- Our new developments
- Our operations and facilities
- Our supply chain
- Green spaces and biodiversity

It is an independent sustainability audit system that provides a complete organisational-wide target that unites all directorates to deliver on key environmental commitments, and demonstrate to external stakeholders the success recorded, whilst striving to improve all-round sustainability performance. The assessment also offers an opportunity to show how participating organisations compare against their peers. SLH is committed to:

- Delivering affordable, healthy, low-carbon homes to our customers
- Supporting our customers social, economic and environmental wellbeing
- Reducing carbon emissions through the introduction of electric fleet vehicles
- Ensuring sustainability is integral to the procurement of goods, utilities and services
- Working within our neighbourhoods to provide green spaces and promote biodiversity
- Being proactive in waste management
- Engaging staff, customers and stakeholders, including training and sharing knowledge on sustainability
- Working with customers, stakeholders and partners to co-deliver sustainability actions

South Liverpool Homes' Sustainability Strategy

South Liverpool Homes' (SLH) owns and manages about 3,800 properties in the south of Liverpool and we are responsible for looking after these homes and their neighbourhoods.

The majority of these homes are in the Speke and Garston districts and we have been investing continuously to make them fit for now and the future. We ensure these homes continue to meet the needs of our customers while also looking for opportunities to reduce emissions associated with them.

As an organisation we will consider tailored plans to deliver our social purpose by ensuring that customers have resilient, high-quality homes, low energy bills and access to affordable new technologies. For existing homes, we will align planned investment programmes and the installation of renewable technologies with a focus on a fabric-first approach. Investment plans will include whole-life costings and return on investment (ROI) assessments which will include a review of the net present value (NPV) score and cost-in-use calculations.

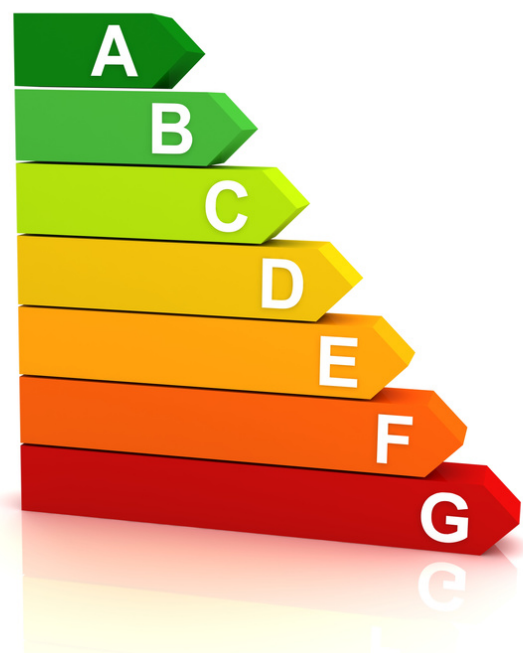
As a social landlord, South Liverpool Homes has committed to contributing to tackling climate change. As well as contributing to the reduction of the effects of climate change, we must also ensure the maximisation of income generation through external funding and the generation of cost savings to support our customers.

Our homes currently have a current average SAP rating of 70, with over 70% of our homes at EPC C or above.

EPC band (SAP rating)	Number of homes	% of homes
B (81-91)	745	19.7%
C (69 - 80)	1,932	51%
D (55-68)	1,088	28.7%
E (39-54)	23	0.6%

During 23/24 we undertook a review of the energy performance of all of our housing stock. The outcome of this analysis identified which homes were in the lowest energy band and we have committed to ensuring that all existing homes will reach EPC C by 2030.

Our approach to improvement and investment in our homes will be on a fabric first concept. We will, where possible undertake energy efficiency works alongside other improvements in the home. The aim to minimise the impact on the resident and carry out the work in the most efficient way.



People

We consider our people as our greatest asset. As a major landlord in south Liverpool we offer a range of support services to our customers including financial inclusion, employability and other services to promote health and wellbeing.

We will invest in our people by:

Supporting and upskilling our customers to improve their social, economic and environmental wellbeing;

- Provide tools and resources to support our customers in managing energy bills, waste disposal, recycling and their health, education and wellbeing
- Provide carbon literacy training and workshops for our tenants of our communities
- Work with schools and community groups to raise awareness of key sustainability messages
- Ensure key sustainability messages are delivered through a variety of platforms

Building the knowledge and skills within our workforce to deliver a sustainable future:

- Upskill our current workforce through carbon literacy and low-carbon technology skills development
- Embed sustainability throughout the organisation via training and sustainability communication
- Develop sustainability training plans for colleagues within the business which are tailored to their work area

Working in partnership to reduce carbon emissions across the Liverpool City Region, sharing research and learning:

- Participate in good practice forums for sharing learning, good practice and operational delivery experiences
- Seek funding opportunities for sustainable development and research projects to contribute to our stated objectives
- Trial new initiatives to gather data on over/underheating within homes to drive interventions such as utility advice or upgrading of space/water heating
- Work in partnership with LCC to identify green spaces that can be turned into usable utility spaces or green areas that are neglected





To work towards our 2050 aim of achieving net-zero carbon emissions we will:

Invest in our existing homes to reduce carbon emissions and build climate resilience:

- Invest in homes which have an EPC rating less than C over the next five years
- Invest £1.25m in the next five years in existing properties to improve energy efficiency
- Continue to retrofit a number of empty properties to learn and test new technologies
- Install technologies which can monitor thermal comfort in the home

Build sustainable and affordable homes across all tenures:

- Build new homes which achieve a minimum EPC rating of B
- Meet the Future Homes Standard, as a minimum, by 2025
- Ensure that all developments make a positive impact on the external environment and improve biodiversity
- Build homes which are future-proofed against predicted climate risks, e.g. flooding and overheating
- Use energy-efficient building materials and reduce waste and recycle/reuse where possible

Review and invest in our existing offices and communal spaces to reduce carbon emissions:

- Redesign our office space, recycling and reusing furniture and equipment where necessary
- Redesign our office space to support agile working
- Improve the working environment by increasing natural lighting and real plants
- Improve and promote opportunities for recycling and reducing waste

Planet

South Liverpool Homes' assets and service delivery have a significant impact on the environment from the carbon emissions generated by our fleet to the resources we use and the waste we produce.

To work towards achieving net-zero carbon emissions by 2050 we are committed to:

1. Improving the quality of our green space and ensuring net biodiversity gain in our new developments:

- Invest in our green spaces in Speke and Garston to improve the external environment
- Develop a five-year green space plan in 2024 that is linked to investment priorities within Speke and Garston.
- Work in partnership to develop community gardens, orchards and wildflower areas
- Work with LCC to reduce fly tipping, increase skip days and street lighting
- Include biodiversity net gain on all new build sites as part of South Liverpool Homes Development Plan

Reducing carbon emissions from staff travel and our repairs and maintenance fleet

- Move all fleet/grounds maintenance vehicles to electric vehicles by 2030
- Develop and implementing a sustainable travel policy by 2025
- Introduce a leasing scheme for colleagues which promotes the use of electric vehicles
- Promote agile working practices and technologies to reduce the number of miles travelled by colleagues
- Promote the Bike2Work scheme for the purchase of cycles and e-bikes

Reduce our overall environmental impact to achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 2050

- Achieve SHIFT Silver assessment by 2025
- Invest in technology to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in our homes
- Ensure current and future investments play a positive role in supporting sustainable development



Pound

In order to build on strong financial performance, our commitment to deliver the best value for customers, maximise investment opportunities, meeting net-carbon-zero objectives, and work with partners to deliver more, we will:

Develop a broad approach to measuring performance, in particular, what impact our services have on communities through Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) reporting:

- Create ESG reporting frameworks, identifying what we do, why we do it and what impact it has
- Report on our ESG metrics annually
- Ensure that our procurement process includes what carbon reduction targets each suppliers/contractors has set
- Ensure that our business planning includes for the investment in homes to improve energy efficiency



Assessing the impact

A quarterly progress report on sustainability and carbon reduction will form part of our KPI reporting. From 2024 this will be overseen by the ESG forum and led by the Executive Director of Finance.

The SHIFT assessment and SRS framework will help identify necessary improvements and set targets. Progress will be measured against all the relevant indicators with a drive to move all homes to EPC C (minimum) by 2030, reduce transport and supply chains emissions and promote all-round carbon reduction in our operations.

We will build on our existing relationship with other similar organizations and interest groups within and outside the sector to learn and share good practice. We will work with our landlord and their agent (Amey) to identify opportunities for energy reduction within our office space and empower our eco-champion colleagues and the ESG forum to identify opportunities for further improvement.

Frequency of review: Sustainability at South Liverpool Homes beyond 2030

The approach taken by South Liverpool Homes is that the future delivery of climate change objectives depends on the sustainability work we do today.

However, we must consider the impact of a changing world, which requires adaptability and the ability to respond to changing legislation and operational requirements. To ensure the effectiveness and relevance of this sustainability strategy, it will be reviewed bi-annually. The review will consider changes in technology, funding, construction methods and learning from metrics.

