

## Longhurst Group's Sustainability Strategy

Longhurst Group has become increasingly aware of its ethical and environmental responsibilities, both as a landlord and an employer. Managing over 16,000 homes from more than 10 office bases spread over 4 regions, employing over a 1,000 staff, and with a wide range of business partners and contacts, Longhurst recognises its role as an influential body within the housing and business sector. Longhurst hopes that, through its ethical and environmental focus, it can make a positive change upon its own environmental impact, as well as educate and influence others to follow its example.

Longhurst recognises that climate change is a very real threat to economic, environmental and social stability. It has the potential to kill large numbers of people, destabilise national and global economies, and permanently degrade the natural environment. The Climate Change Bill of 2008 proposes a target of reducing carbon emissions by 60% by 2050, and by between 26% and 32% by 2020. This is just one of the many influential factors that are driving Longhurst Group to take a firm approach to the impact it has on the environment.

There is increasing scientific consensus on the likely implications of climate change, and a compelling body of evidence to support the need for action now to reduce atmospheric concentrations of gases which give rise to climate change.

Policy and regulatory responses to address the issue in an equitable and fair way will however take time to develop and implement, because this is the most complex global problem to confront modern society.

In developing our Sustainability Strategy, Longhurst is embracing the challenges of climate change. By reducing the organisation's production of greenhouse gases, our objectives are to avoid contributing to serious and irreversible damage to the planet's ecosystems, to manage our business in the most environmentally friendly way possible, and to educate and encourage others to follow suit.

### **Statements of intent**

- **Longhurst Group will seek to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from our own operations and by improving the thermal performance of our stock in line with Government targets.**
- **Longhurst Group will seek to minimise waste generation from our**

- own operations and from our existing stock and increase recycling.
- Longhurst Group aim to meet Government expectations on all new Developments as a bare minimum and improve on these standards where possible, achieving Zero carbon on new developments by 2016
  - Communicate our aims and successes effectively to staff, Board members, tenants and others, taking every opportunity to educate others and encourage good practice.
  - Work with tenants to assist them in living in a more sustainable way, providing relevant information in accessible formats and linking this work into other relevant initiatives such as our approach to financial inclusion
  - Longhurst Group has researched and adopted a suitable framework for delivering the above objectives, and has joined SHIFT, the Sustainable Homes Index For Tomorrow

Longhurst has now appointed a Sustainability Manager to ensure a consistent drive forward on the above objectives.

**Areas where Longhurst wish to assess current impact and look at positive ways to improve upon this include:**

- Research video conferencing facilities and look at installing across the Group if suitable to save on travel etc. Also research the 'saleability' of this to other businesses
- Research the expansion of home working facilities and policy to reduce 'travel to work' impact on the environment including the possibility of 'interest free loans' for public transport usage and other incentives as appropriate
- Research the setting up of a Group wide intranet to improve on information storage systems and improve the ability to share information to reduce the need to meet and therefore travel between offices
- Researching organisations 'Carbon Footprint' and working to reduce this through various means including contributing to projects which help neutralise this e.g. hydro power projects etc.
- Working with the Development function, POD and the Blue Skies consortium as part of the Group's approach to sustainability and increase our investment in Environmentally friendly development, and the promotion of this to others

- Having environmental impact information available on website including our progress towards meeting our policy / strategy aims
- Investing in locally based ecological projects such as tree planting initiatives etc.
- The use of ethically sourced and fair trade products
- Reviewing stationery and external printing services – moving towards buying recycled unbleached paper, envelopes, using soya-based inks etc
- Having environment awareness footer to all auto signatures on e-mails, within offices, on web site, stationery etc.
- Research the sourcing of energy efficient light bulbs, power down units, recycling provision etc. which could be made available to both tenants and staff/board members etc.
- Seeking additional and complimentary funding sources to assist us in meeting our aims
- Reviewing energy suppliers and look to source our energy from renewable suppliers
- Carrying out office energy audits to ensure that we are as energy efficient as possible within the offices we occupy
- Research recycling practices within all Group Company Offices and make recommendations to increase/improve
- To research chemical usage within the Group companies (such as cleaning products, dishwasher tablets, washing up liquid, bathroom soaps etc.) and source environmentally friendly alternative where possible (in line with Health and Safety guidance)
- Research the best way of promoting the positive work of the Group and educate tenants, Board Members, partners etc. in the sustainability agenda