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# Environmental Standard

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## Working towards a greener future

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Earth is our only home and it's important that we take care of it. For this reason, we're all responsible for doing our part to protect the environment and create a better place for future generations.

Our Environmental Standard helps us to outline how Nottingham Community Housing Association (NCHA) will play its part. Through it, we'll strive to reduce our impact on the environment, our carbon emissions and improve our environmental footprint.

Our ambition is to improve our communities by providing energy efficient homes, increasing the number of green spaces and reducing waste. By committing to this, we'll reduce our overall operating costs and the cost of energy for our customers.

Ultimately, we're aiming to be an environmentally sustainable housing association, with a near carbon neutral footprint well in advance of national targets.

## Doing your part

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It's important to us to provide ways in which our customers can reduce their impact on the environment. Below we've included things we can all think about doing to be more environmentally friendly.

### Want to know how to reduce your carbon footprint?

Take a look at some top tips:

- Drive less or consider more environmentally friendly methods of transport – this helps to create cleaner air, reduce carbon emissions, and could save you money.
- Try to reduce your meat or dairy intake. Modern methods of industrial farming can cause huge amounts of environmental damage. One meat free day a week could make all the difference.
- Reduce your plastic use – this will really help to stop the pollution in our oceans.

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- Switch and save! Changing to a renewable energy provider could save you money and help the planet. Visit the [Money Saving Expert](#) or the [Switch It](#) website for information on green energy.

Take a look at the [Greenpeace](#) and [Wired](#) websites for more information on the steps you can take.

## Home energy grants

If you rent an NCHA home or own your home, you could be eligible to receive home energy grants. You could be entitled to free energy saving products, smart meter sessions or information on home insulation. Visit the [Simple Energy Advice website](#) and enter your postcode to see what's available in your area.

## Green Homes Grants

If you're a homeowner you could be entitled to help through the government's Green Homes Grant. You could get up to £5,000 to pay part of the cost of energy saving measures like insulation. Visit the [gov.uk website](#) for more information on the grant.

## Greenhouse gas emissions

Each year, NCHA will publish its greenhouse gas emissions to track our progress. Our 2019/20 emissions are detailed in the table below. Our target is to reduce our total emissions by 50% by 2025. We'll do this by changing the way we manage our fleet vehicles and offices, as well as using more renewable energy.

NCHA Group	Direct greenhouse gas emissions		Energy indirect emissions	Other indirect emissions	Total
	Natural gas	Fleet vehicles	Electricity	Grey fleet (colleagues using own cars for business purposes)	
Total emissions	988,013	399,811	816,178	88,754	2,292,756
Per employee	988	400	816	89	2,293
Per tenancy	103	42	85	9	239

All figures are in kilograms of carbon dioxide equivalent (kgCO<sub>2</sub>e) and are rounded to the nearest unit.

## Our environmental initiatives

At NCHA, we're committed to implementing processes that will help us to have a more positive impact on the environment.

### Procurement and contracts:

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- We'll define our environmental expectations within our supplier code of conduct and check that they comply with it.
- We'll specify environmental requirements for all tenders over £20,000. We'll give preference to suppliers who show how they'll will support our Environmental Standard as part of the procurement process.
- We'll reduce our plastic use and packaging where possible, while examining the procurement of recycled goods and materials.
- We'll procure electricity from renewable sources.

## New and existing homes:

- We'll develop our own standard for new developments based on the government's [National Design Guide](#).
- We'll review the best options to heat homes after restrictions on fitting new gas boilers come in 2025, ensuring that these options are sustainable, reliable and economical.
- We'll seek to align product use across new build and existing homes, maximising opportunities for retrofitting new sustainable technologies.
- We'll ensure all homes under our management achieve EPC Band C (minimum 69 SAP rating) efficiency by 2030. This means we'll be making them as energy efficient as possible, whilst reducing bills and carbon emissions.
- We'll align our development and asset strategies to the government's Clean Growth Strategy and Future Homes Standard.

## Fleet vehicles:

- We aim to replace all our petrol and diesel vehicles with low or zero emission alternatives, taking advantage of any scrappage or low emission incentives.
- When replacing fleet vehicles, we'll specify low or zero emission vehicles, according to our business needs.

## Office buildings:

- We'll develop a new head office which meets the [Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method](#)'s 'excellent' standard, aspiring for an 'outstanding' standard. This helps us to make sure every stage of the building design is completed to a high standard.
- We'll survey remaining workplaces, looking for opportunities to improve energy efficiency. For example, we'll try to improve insulation, fit low energy lighting, use natural ventilation and cooling, and install green energy supplies.
- We'll assess the requirement for electric charging points, providing an incentive for colleagues and visitors to switch to clean transport. We'll also encourage colleagues to cycle or walk more by providing facilities such as, showers, changing rooms and lockers where appropriate.

## Technology:

- We'll review how we use technology to create virtual meeting space, reducing mileage and saving time.
- We'll review our IT equipment, installations and use. Currently it's responsible for around 50% of our office energy costs. Therefore, we'll try to design high energy equipment out where possible (e.g. by using cloud services instead of local air conditioned servers).
- We'll continue to implement processes, technologies and communications to reduce unnecessary and wasteful printing.
- We'll examine the potential savings of recycling rather than replacing IT equipment.

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## People:

- When it's safe to do so, we'll look at ways to increase incentives for colleagues to share transport, use more efficient vehicles or use green transport.
- We'll review options for homeworking through our Agile Working Corporate Project, saving on journeys and the cost of energy in offices.

## Energy:

- We'll analyse the potential impact of turning down heating in offices and common areas, while maintaining health and safety requirements and customer satisfaction. Current estimates suggest that energy use reduces by 5% per 1°C.
- We'll renegotiate our electricity and gas contracts, seeking reduced costs, while preferring renewable energy sources.

## Water efficiency:

- We'll reduce water pressure at inlet valves, encouraging less waste through water run-off.
- We'll look at options to recycle waste water or rainwater, as well as the benefits of installing hot water recovery systems.
- We'll examine the savings of fitting water quality filters. Current estimates suggest that this could save up to 15% in central heating costs.

## Waste management:

- We'll examine options to increase secure waste paper recycling facilities in our offices.
- We'll increase recycling facilities in our offices for non-paper waste, removing individual waste bins and encouraging colleagues to recycle responsibly.
- We'll examine opportunities to recycle construction materials, including paint, by donating it to charities and taking part in local recycling initiatives.

## Carbon offsetting and biodiversity:

- We'll look for opportunities to plant trees as each tree offsets around 0.2 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> each year. We'll also look for ways to create more communal green spaces for customers, such as pocket parks and allotments.
- We'll examine options to join and incentivise suppliers to join recognised carbon offsetting schemes.