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Housing People

Cornerstone Housing

Greener Ways Strategy

2025 - 2030

Our vision for supporting warm homes that are fit for purpose for the future

NET ZERO by 2045

Our Greener Ways strategy

By 2030, our Greener Ways strategy will deliver more energy-efficient, cost-effective homes and healthy communities, enhancing quality of life while supporting a more sustainable future for all.

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NET ZERO by 2045

CONSTRUCTION SITE
KEEP OUT
Hedgehog highways laid
Welcome your (prickly) neighbours...
We create hedgehog highways, cozy habitats, and native plantings that help attract insects to provide essential food.
Strongvox Homes
Building nature friendly homes

Foreword
Adam Carrick, Chair and Louise Cumberland, Vice Chair

“Our organisation is all about building and looking after affordable, high-quality, rented and shared ownership homes across Exeter and the surrounding areas. Every year, we create more homes to meet the growing needs in our region because we believe that home is what makes everything else possible. By offering safe, stable, affordable homes, we open the door to health and wellbeing, work and education, family, friends and communities. Making a positive impact through homes and places is at the heart of what we do. We care about our impact now and for generations to come.

We are ambitious about moving towards a greener future for our residents, shared owners, and organisations. We’ve worked with residents, colleagues, and board members to shape our plans and map the difference we can make together.”

Adam Carrick

Louise Cumberland

Message from Harriet Bosnell, Cornerstone CEO

"Cornerstone recognises that climate change is both a local and worldwide challenge. We acknowledge a housing associations' role in reducing carbon emissions.

Greener Ways is about warmer homes for residents that are fit for purpose for the future. It also links Cornerstone's other key strategic commitments to ensure that Climate Change and Sustainability are embedded throughout the organisation as we proceed towards Net Zero by 2045.

The strategy is underpinned by an annual action plan and dedicated resources to support our sustainable commitments. Progress against the action plan will be reported to and monitored by our Resident Engagement Panel (REP) and board members.

The Greener Ways Strategy is the start of our ambitions to reduce emissions and reach Net Zero. We are committed to delivering this plan in partnership with you, residents, staff, councils, and like-minded partners for the benefit of all of us."

You said… what residents told us

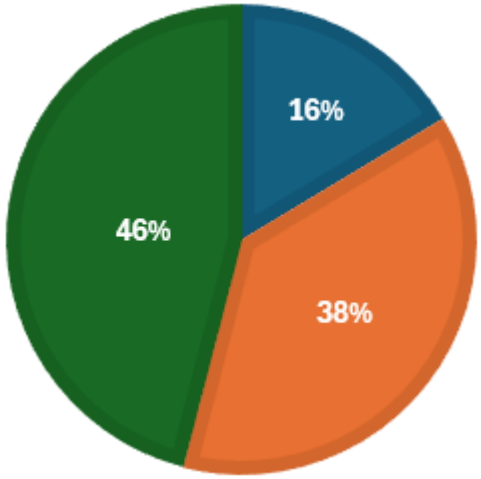
During our big plan roadshow in January 2025, we asked residents what the most important environmental factor they would like to see us achieve in the future. Our strategy has reflected this.

" Raised beds & planters and some edible plants for communal gardening as there are children living in the area now "

" Solar panels are helpful to residents it means cheaper electric. "

" All of it. Lots of green fingered tenants. Solar panels would be great. "

" We have a patch of grass, we have families and older people, we could create a little *vegetable patch might be nice for the community to get involved. "*



- Solar Panels / Air source heat pumps
- Insulations and a warmer home
- Wildlife Planting / Edible Garden /Allotments

"If you want to have your voice heard, consider joining our Resident Engagement Panel. Green policies affect all residents. They are the way forward for the planet and will affect all of us, and it only takes a small step to change something. Small savings by all of us will bring changes to everyone. If Cornerstone can reduce its carbon footprint, all residents will benefit from it."

Keith Killingback – Member of the Resident Engagement Panel.

Climate Change statement

Our Climate Change Statement focuses on four key themes across our business to achieve Net-Zero.

Individual

Use our scale and capacity to promote sustainability and encourage staff, residents and other stakeholders to consider changes to reduce carbon emissions.

Landlord

Improve the energy efficiency of existing and new homes and decarbonise our homes. Within our communities, we will tackle the impacts of climate change and improve the environment.

Employer

Target carbon reduction in our business travel, office estate and consumption of materials.

Business

Develop sustainable procurement through our supply chains and eliminate waste by providing services and managing and maintaining our properties.

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Cornerstone Greener Ways Strategy

1. To reduce the carbon footprint for us and our residents. Build and maintain properties so that they are energy efficient.

2. Deliver meaningful positive change in partnership with residents and communities. Enabling and engaging with recycling, waste reduction and reusing resources across all we do.

3. We aim to be earth-kind and sustainable in how we do business . We will introduce ways of working that encourage and support the benefits of sustainability.

Our focus will be on:

- Measuring, managing and reporting carbon emissions
- Supporting energy efficiency through insulation, low carbon heating systems, and renewable energy systems like solar panels.
- Being sustainable in how we do business, engaging our communities and building new homes
- Working with supply chains that are sustainable and reducing impact on the environment

This document sets out our strategic aims and objectives as we progress to Net-Zero by 2045, the important milestones integral to our progress, and how this is linked to other key Cornerstone strategic plans. The Greener Ways Strategy will be reviewed annually with a new version developed in 2030.

Carbon emissions

To reduce our carbon emissions (the amount we contribute to damaging greenhouse gases), we will ensure our homes and buildings are energy efficient.

Over the short to medium term, our strategy will focus on activities that we can directly control and measure. In 2025, we will implement an annual process of measuring and monitoring our carbon emissions, and the delivery of this strategy will support their yearly reduction.

Initially, the measures and carbon reduction within our Greener Ways Strategy will be on building learning and knowledge around sustainability and our role in housing, business travel and fleet. We will map progress against our carbon emission baseline (2024) to demonstrate the positive progress our carbon reduction activities and provide the basis for reporting on our carbon emissions.

Our plans will be extended to cover residents' homes and communities. We are developing plans to improve energy efficiency and replace heating systems with renewable options to achieve this ambition. We will also invest in new skills for staff to aid better purchasing of goods and services.

UN's Sustainable Development Goals

The Greener Ways strategy is also linked to 8 of the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals in the following ways;

1

No poverty

• Improve the energy efficiency of homes to address fuel poverty.
• Support residents to sustain their homes with communication and information on energy use.

2

Good health and well-being

Attractive environments offer green space to relax, socialise, and be active. They also mitigate the effects of climate change on individuals, homes, and communities. Property standards provide internal and external space.

3

Affordable and clean energy

• Decarbonise homes.
• Office estate and vehicles powered by renewable energy.
• Communal energy supplies are provided from renewable sources.

4

Sustainable cities and communities

• Community and environment support local living.
• Reduce unnecessary business travel.

5

Responsible consumption and production

• Sustainable procurement and supply chain management.
• Minimise the impact of management and maintenance services.
• Promote activities to reduce, recycle and reuse products.

6

Climate action

• Communication strategy to support understanding of climate change.
• Asset management strategy reflects mitigation and adaptation measures.
• Carbon reduction targets are set and measured.

7

Life below water

• Sustainable procurement and supply chain management.

8

Life on land

• Estate management supports green space and biodiversity.
• Assess the carbon capture capacity of estates. Property design guides consider where and what is built to support local communities.

Energy efficient homes

Energy efficiency of homes is measured using an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC). Currently (as of 31/01/2025):
- 85.1% of our stock that have Valid EPC's meet bands A, B or C. Leaving 14.9% at a band D or below.

Our targets align with the current Government target to achieve band C for all properties by 2030.

We know that 17 % of our properties have renewable energy sources, such as solar panels or air source heat pumps installed. From 2025 we will increase our use of renewable energy to ensuring a warm, affordable homes that are fit for purpose in the futures.

In addition to improving the energy efficiency of existing properties, we will seek to improve the energy efficiency of our offices.

We are committed to a fabric first methodology focusing focuses on improving a building's envelope to reduce energy consumption.

Delivering meaningful positive change in partnership with residents and communities, enabling and engaging with reuse, recycling and waste reduction across all we do.

Greener Ways needs to make a positive difference to our residents. To do this, we need to implement energy efficiency and decarbonisation solution that enhance our residents ability to sustain and heat their homes. We will use of local or national funding initiatives to enhance services without impacting on the rent.

To raise awareness, we will start a programme of training and information sessions for our staff in 2025. This will continue to be reviewed and rolled out annually to assess its impact.
In partnership with our residents, we will work together to make changes at the community level, roll out Greener Ways together, and support and encourage positive action.

We aim to increase awareness of the importance of warm homes' energy efficiency and sustainability.

Being earth-kind in how we do business, engaging our communities and building new homes to enable residents to benefit from being more sustainable

We are committed to becoming more sustainable in how we do business, engaging our communities and building new homes. We will seek understand and learn how to mitigate our carbon emissions and set realistic targets and timelines to make changes. We will look for local and national partnerships and collaborations to help make Greener Ways possible now and in the future.

Greener Ways will require staff, and third-party contractors and suppliers to understand our aims and the changes necessary to how we partner organisations and contract with local and national business's.

Initial review of existing stock condition has identified some properties which are at risk from the effects of climate change, particularly a warmer, wetter environment .Our strategic plans will map and address the challenges climate change presents with residents help to map properties impacted by things like damp and mould and work together to ensure climate resilient homes.

As a business we procure a substantial amount of goods and services, we have not yet assessed the impact of our supply chains on our carbon footprint. The first part of our approach to sustainability in our supply chains will be to understand the carbon footprint of materials and to produce a baseline from which to set targets. Our preference will be to buy from people who measure their carbon impact and seek to reduce it. We will actively look for partnerships that work with us to increase our ability to reduce waste and recycle equipment and materials and care about homes that will support a long term cost friendly future.

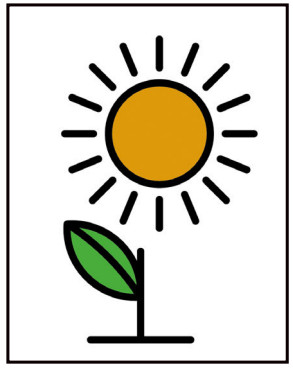
Climate Change Framework

Working to support UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's)

There are 17 UN SDGs which countries across the world have adopted as a blueprint for change to improve lives and protect the environment. We have used the SDGs to place climate change and sustainability core and central to our business planning.

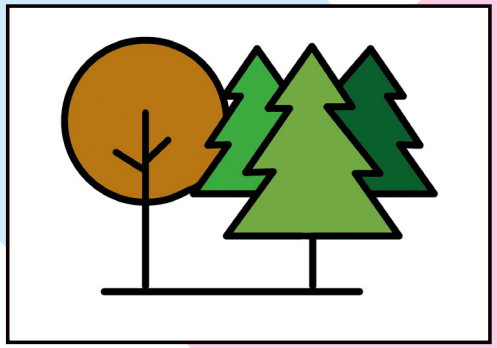
Cornerstone's approach to measuring and reporting on our Greener Ways Strategy

We will report annually to our board and publish on our website our progress against the 12 themes of the Sustainability Reporting Standard for Social Housing (SRS), which can be found here: www.sustainabilityforhousing.org.uk.



Climate Change

- EPC (Energy Performance Certificate) ratings of existing homes
- EPC ratings of new homes
- A list of retrofit activities undertaken in the last 12 months.
- A map of assessed climate risk to homes and supply chain, i.e. increased flood drought and overheating risk

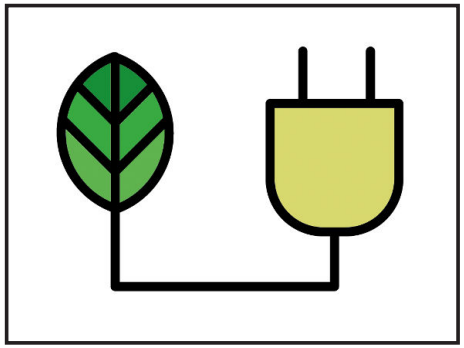


Ecology

- How we have enhanced green space and promoted biodiversity on or near homes.
- A waste management plan in place to identify, manage and reduce pollutants that could cause material harm and measures for evidencing this.

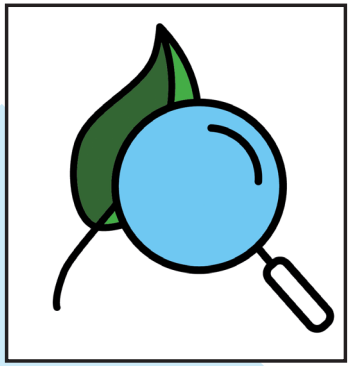
Resource Management

- A Procurement strategy to use or increase the buying and use of responsibly sourced materials for all building and repairs works with targets and measures.
- A waste management plan in place to identify, manage and reduce waste.



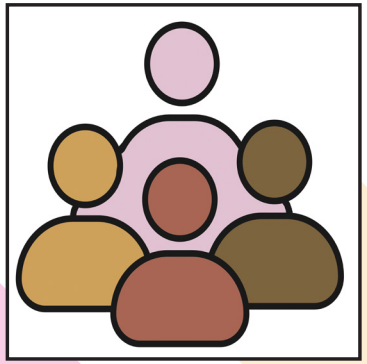
Affordability and Security

- % Share and number of existing homes (owned or managed) completed before the end of the last financial year allocated to General needs (social rent), Intermediate rent, affordable rent, shared ownership, rent to buy, third-party lease
- % Share and number of new homes (owned) completed before the end of the last financial year allocated to General needs (social rent), Intermediate rent, affordable rent, shared ownership, rent to buy, third-party lease
- How we are trying to reduce the effect of high energy costs on our residents.



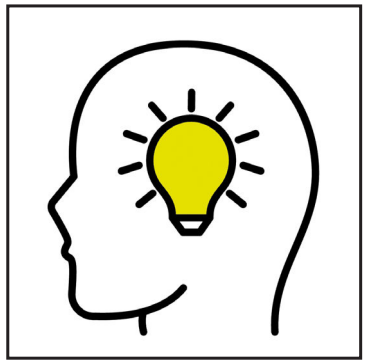
Building Safety and Quality

- % of homes for which all required gas safety checks have been carried out.
- % of homes for which all required fire risk assessments have been carried out.
- % of homes for which all required electrical safety checks have been carried out.
- How do we manage and mitigate the risk of damp and mould for our residents?



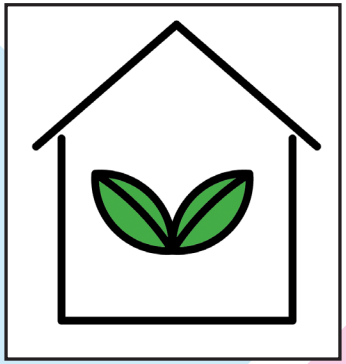
Resident Voice

- Results of Cornerstone's overall Tenant Satisfaction Measures Survey for the previous financial year and actions taken following the results
- Arrangements in place to enable residents to hold leaders to account for the provision of services
- Reviewing how many complaints did the ombudsman determine that maladministration took place in the sector in the last 12 months. How did these result in a change of practice within Cornerstone?



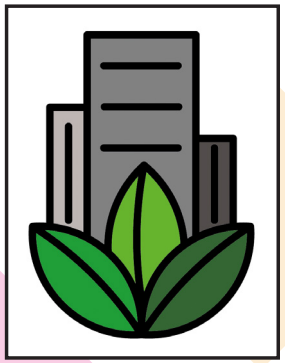
Resident Support

- A list of the key support services Cornerstone offers its residents. How successfully did they improve outcomes? For example – fuel poverty initiatives, apprenticeships in Green skills and employment, financial help



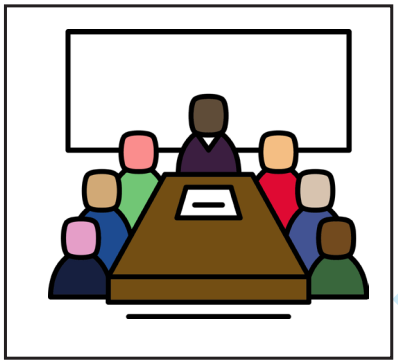
Placemaking

- Description of Cornerstone's community investment activities and how we contribute to positive neighbourhood outcomes for the communities in which our homes are located.



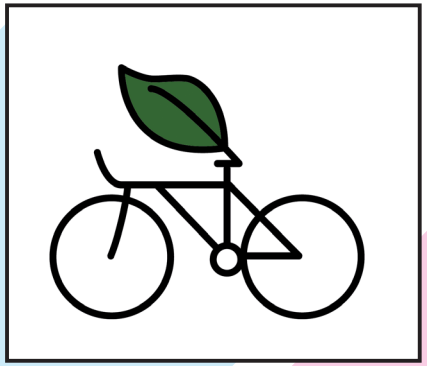
Structure and Governance

- Most recent regulatory grading/status
- How does the Cornerstone Board manage ESG (environmental, social, governance) risk?



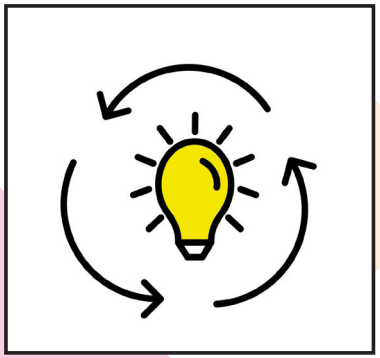
Board and Trustees

- How do we get input from diverse people into the governance processes?
- Evidence that we consider resident voice at the board and senior leadership level.
- Our recruitment policies incorporate EDI into board and senior leadership selection.
- What % of the housing provider's Board have turned over in the last two years? What % of the housing provider's Senior Management Team have turned over in the last two years?
- A succession Plan has been provided to the Cornerstone board in the last 12 months.
- How many years has the Cornerstones current external audit partner been responsible for auditing the accounts?



Staff wellbeing

- Real Living Wage analysis on current roles
- Information shared on our median gender pay gap and CEO median-worker pay gap
- Description of how we promote equality, diversity and inclusion across our staff
- How we support the physical and mental health of our staff
- How we support the professional development of our staff



Supply Chain

- Evidence that Social Value creation (such as carbon impact, biodiversity and training or apprenticeships) are considered when buying goods or services.

Cornerstone's Greener Ways Activities and Timeline

How we will make a difference.

2025/26

- Establish a carbon footprint baseline
- Supply Chain sustainability impact in our contracts
- Start sustainability training programme
- Wildlife and edible planting schemes
- Become a recognised disability employer.
- Seek partnership to support Greener ways strategies
- Communication Plan to raise awareness of energy efficiency and climate change
- Revise our Design Guide to set new standards for new build properties introduced from 2025

2026/27

- Retrofit and renewable skills training staff
- 100 % of new homes have renewable energy
- Van fleet moving to a renewable energy source
- A Low-Carbon Transport Plan for commuter and business travel.
- Cornerstone offices powered by renewable

2027/28

- Retrofit and renewables into our homes
- Green projects focussed on reuse or recycle
- A Waste Minimisation Plan based on reducing our use of materials, choosing more sustainable materials,
- Reusing materials where possible so that less goes to landfills and more is recycled.

2028/29

- All procurement and buying activities consider carbon reduction and sustainability

2029/30

- Less than 5% of waste goes to Landfill because of our waste minimisation plan
- 70% of all our waste is recycled from office and depot

2030/31

- EPC C rating or higher all for Homes
- 80% reduction has been achieved in operational CO_2
- 100% of the van fleet has moved to a renewable source
- Bee-friendly planting and edible gardens thrive across our community land

NET ZERO by 2045

Pollinator
Friendly
Space.