

Part 2:

The framework for delivery

The delivery framework for the standard is intended to ensure that the wider benefits to both tenant and landlord, and the local economy, are captured.

The Tenants perspective

Delivering low carbon housing is about much more than just physical improvements. It is about making a difference to people's lives. From ensuring homes are healthy and comfortable places to live, to instilling pride in their community, and empowering them to take action to reduce carbon emissions.

Five Key Benefits

1. Protecting and enhancing health and wellbeing
2. Making a real difference to fuel poverty
3. Making the disruption worthwhile
4. Protecting and restoring communities
5. Empowering communities with energy

The Landlords perspective

The challenge for landlords in planning ambitious low carbon investment programmes, is to capture the benefits to individual tenants, the wider community, and the local economy in order to make a clear case to funders and lenders for the impact of the investment now, and into the future.

Five Key Benefits

1. Protecting and enhancing assets
2. Protecting and securing future income
3. Minimising the opportunity costs
4. Supporting green collar employment
5. Managing supply chain impacts

Tenant benefit 1: Protecting and enhancing health and wellbeing

Aim: *To protect tenants health by designing out inherent poor performance and by enhancing the positive features of properties.*

Rationale: There is clear evidence that poor quality housing can have a detrimental effect on peoples health. This includes hard to heat properties with inadequate ventilation and damp because of construction defects or failure to control moisture movement through the building structure as a result of improvements. In particular a breathable building fabric, good ventilation and good daylighting have all been shown to be beneficial to people’s health.



Best Practice case study Safe and warm housing improvement project, Merseyside Health Action Zone

The local Health Action Zone funded improvement works to Council-owned properties in order to evaluate the impact on tenants health and wellbeing. Monitoring showed that as well as cutting bills by half the physical improvements led to significant improvements in the feeling of warmth and comfort in the homes and a reduced burden on GP services – particularly for multiple visits.

Landlord benefit 1: Protecting and enhancing assets

Aim: *To use comprehensive fabric improvements to protect and enhance the housing stock, with a focus on overcoming specific flaws and defects.*

Rationale: The ageing existing housing stock requires major investment to protect and enhance it for the future. In some cases non-traditional construction requires more urgent attention. Improvements would focus on weatherproofing and tackling inherent flaws and defects – such as cold bridging or air tightness. This would, not just represent an investment to turnaround poor housing, but would also provide an opportunity to give a boost to popular areas, including owner occupied housing.



Best Practice case study Changing Streets programme, East Riding of Yorkshire Council

Changing Streets is a programme that aims to give an energy efficient facelift to over 53 streets of pre-1919 terraces in Goole. A pilot of four streets has combined overcladding, new windows and doors, fascias and detailing to bring new life to each street. Their mixed tenure has required wider consultation, with the range of different external treatments made available giving variety to each streets appearance. The programme has been very well received with 99% take-up across all tenures.

Tenant benefit 2: Making a real difference to fuel poverty

Aim: *To ensure that tenants energy bills are reduced to $\pounds 5/m^2/yr$ and that properties are affordable for the most vulnerable households.*

Rationale: Vulnerable households living in older properties with higher running costs have become increasingly exposed to rising energy prices, to the detriment of their health and well-being. Worst case vulnerable households are likely to include the elderly and single parents.



Best Practice case study Defining what is affordable, Newark and Sherwood Council

Newark Energy Agency carried out research in support of the Councils affordable warmth strategy. The aim was to establish a minimum target running cost to ensure that all properties are 'capable of delivering affordable energy', reflecting recent higher fuel prices and using single parent with two children and a single pensioner as reference households. Target running costs of $\pounds 8/m^2/yr$ (2007/08 prices) and a performance of SAP C have formed the basis for improvements.

Landlord benefit 2: Protecting and securing future income

Aim: *To use improvement programmes to reduce maintenance costs and to secure future income generation from rent and, where necessary, service charges.*

Rationale: By investing in comprehensive improvements that sustain the popularity of areas, void levels will be minimised. There is evidence that by reducing energy bills tenants are more able to pay their rent on time. Low carbon technologies, such as district heating, have also been shown to reduce overheads such as gas safety checks. The savings from improvements may need to be shared between tenants and landlords in order to fund future improvement works, potentially through services charges.



Best Practice case study Sureuro project, Sandwell Homes and EU partners

The Lyng regeneration project in Sandwell formed one of ten major refurbishment projects in the UK, Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden and the Czech Republic. The aim was to develop a strategic management approach to investment in the long term sustainability and value of social housing assets. A refurbishment investment appraisal tool was developed to capture the Whole Life Cost benefits of investment. Experience from EU partners also highlighted the importance of engaging tenants in the planning and implementation of programmes.

Tenant benefit 3: Making the disruption worthwhile

Aim: To ensure that the impacts of disruption to carry out improvements are minimised through engagement and planning, and that the benefits are communicated.

Rationale: Whilst measures involving the least disruption should be prioritised upgrading older or hard to treat properties to the Standard may still require substantial disruption. Where this is deemed to be necessary the process should be managed to minimise the impact – particularly for more vulnerable tenants – recognising that it is peoples homes. Engagement should ensure that the benefits are clearly communicated and articulated in an accessible way. This should include owner occupiers, who are likely to have to pay for improvement works.



Best Practice case study Putting the tenant first, Wates Construction

Wates Living Space have put in place a range of measures to engage with tenants and minimise the disruption from major improvement works. Tenants receive an introductory letter followed by open days at a local venue designed to showcase examples of the proposed works. Support services during the works include help packing and protecting possessions, respite facilities, reconnection of appliances and a handyman to refix fixtures and fittings. At handover a Home Maintenance Booklet and Green Guide are provided which are explained in-full to each tenant.

Landlord benefit 3: Minimising the opportunity costs

Aim: To ensure that the opportunity cost associated with getting contractors on-site and gaining access to properties is minimised by obtaining the maximum benefit.

Rationale: The scale of investment that will be required to meet the Standard means that a number of substantial measures may need to be implemented at the same time. This means that all opportunities that bring contractors on site and enable them to gain access to properties should be maximised by ensuring that the highest performing specification for fabric elements is installed where practical.



Best Practice case study Getting access to high rises, Sandwell Homes

Sandwells Homes' high rise programme has set the standard for energy efficient improvement works. Extensive use of insulated overcladding has been made in order to transform each blocks appearance and raise the SAP performance to at least C. The high cost of access to carry out the external works, together with the noise and vibration, have led Sandwell and its contractors to specify high performance insulation systems.

Tenant benefit 4: Protecting and restoring communities

Aim: *To restore community pride by making physical improvements an integral part of wider neighbourhood programmes.*

Rationale: There is increasing evidence that comprehensive improvements to the quality of housing – particularly where this improves or changes the appearance of properties – can have a transformational impact on communities and neighbourhoods, reversing decline and restoring community pride.



Best Practice case study Daneville Estate improvements, Liverpool Mutual Homes

Up until 2008 the Daneville Estate was in a very poor state of repair with over 60 long term void properties. Consultation with local residents revealed a strong wish to preserve the properties. A £17 million investment programme was initiated to bring over 330 properties up to modern standards, including comprehensive overcladding with insulation to improve energy efficiency. This has resulted in a dramatic turnaround of the estate, with waiting lists to leave now transformed into waiting lists to move in.

Landlord benefit 4: Supporting green collar employment

Aim: *To harness the potential, and certainty, created by a planned programme of housing investment in order to grow the low carbon economy.*

Rationale: With the Government's new 'Low carbon transition plan' placing a strong emphasis on the economic benefits of a future low carbon economy, this is a clear area in which the security provided by large-scale, planned investment and the accompanying demand for low carbon products and services could be harnessed to create 'green collar' employment opportunities and capture the value added in the local economy.



Partner case study Summerfield Eco-neighbourhood, Family Housing Association

The Summerfield project in Birmingham has promoted and demonstrated to tenants and residents the benefits of energy efficiency and renewable energy. Funded by Birmingham City Council and Urban Living a strong focus of the project has been on supporting local opportunities for new business and training. From the outset Family has worked with New World Solar, a new local startup, providing them a secure source of installation work and arranging placements with the specialist support of Jericho (a local charity) to train local people as solar installers.

Tenant benefit 5: Empowering communities with energy

Aim: To empower communities to manage their own energy use – whether in the home, street, block or neighbourhood.

Rationale: There are demonstrated ways in which households and communities can become more engaged with their energy use:

- **Tailored advice:** Households respond well to tailored energy efficiency advice including how to manage their energy bills;
- **Troubleshooting:** Tenant inductions and training of caretaker ‘champions’ to troubleshoot common problems and queries;
- **Monitoring:** Households respond well to simple energy monitors which help them understand where they use energy in the home;
- **Community energy:** Accountable community-led Energy Service Companies (ESCo’s) help to deliver community heating.



Best Practice case study Aberdeen Heat and Power, An accountable community ESCo

Aberdeen Heat and Power was established to deliver investment in affordable warmth for Council tenants. An independent non-for-profit Energy Service Company (ESCo) it has developed Combined Heat and Power (CHP) projects supplying heat to high rise blocks and community buildings. Transparency and accountability in setting heating prices is ensured by tenant representation on the board of directors.

Landlord benefit 5: Managing supply chain impacts

Aim: To minimise the environmental impact of low carbon products by carefully screening them for their A+ sustainability credentials.

Rationale: Large-scale investment will create substantial demand for a range of building products. Options for specifications which will need to be weighed up based on their performance, fitness for purpose and their cost. Lifecycle environmental impacts should also be a primary consideration, with an aspiration to achieve A+ performance against Ecohomes XB Green Guide ratings, and should be captured as a major environmental ‘aspects’ to drive continuous improvements to comply with the requirements of Environmental Management Systems such as ISO 14001 and EMAS.



Best Practice case study Managing environmental performance, Accord Housing Group & Sandwell Homes

Both organisations have recognised the importance of improving their environmental performance through the use of Environmental Management Systems and have both achieved ISO 14001 and EMAS. This includes their housing stock which is identified as a key activity which is then analysed through process mapping to identify its significant risks and impacts. These are then systematically managed and, importantly, investment programmes will be geared to meet related Environmental Objectives and Targets.