

# Sustainability Policy

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Architects

## 1. Policy

Buildings must be loved to be truly sustainable. If they are loved, they last. Our Design Approach, which drives all we do, results in buildings that are loved by those that own and use them. We therefore consider 'sustainability' holistically. It is about creating projects and relationships that last, that work, that meet our clients' requirements, that are financially viable, that protect the environment and that bring benefits to the local community.

To be able to apply this approach in our projects and decision making, we continually develop our knowledge and expertise in sustainability, across all members of our team, through our training, research and development activities.

We adopt a collaborative approach with our clients because sometimes we find potential or actual conflicts between sustainability goals. This means that when we encounter such a difference or conflict, we work with our clients to reconcile them, according to their values and objectives as well as ours.

In practical terms you can see what our policy means in terms of:

### *The Way We Run Our Business;*

We are committed to providing a quality service in a manner that ensures a safe and healthy workplace for our employees, the public, and minimises our potential impact on the environment.

We operate in compliance with all relevant environmental legislation and strive to use pollution prevention and environmental best practices.

We:

- will integrate the consideration of environmental concerns and impacts into all of our decision making and activities.
- will promote environmental awareness among our employees and encourage them to work in an environmentally responsible manner, such as by working electronically wherever it is safe and secure to do so while ensuring that all key information is fully and securely backed up.
- will reduce waste through re-use and recycling and by purchasing recycled, recyclable or refurbished equipment, products and materials where these alternatives are available, economical and suitable.
- will pursue responsible disposal of remaining unavoidable waste.
- will promote efficient use of space heating/lighting, equipment, materials and resources.
- will purchase and use environmentally responsible products accordingly.
- will include energy efficiency as one of the selection criteria when purchasing new equipment.
- will plan journeys to be efficient in the use of time and resources.
- will avoid unnecessary use of hazardous materials and products, seek substitutions when feasible, and take all reasonable steps to protect human health and the environment when such materials must be used, stored and disposed of.
- will where required by legislation or where significant health, safety or environmental hazards exist, develop and maintain appropriate emergency response programmes.
- will communicate our environmental commitment to clients, customers and the public and encourage them to support it.

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- will strive to continually improve our environmental performance and minimise the social impact and damage of activities by periodically reviewing our environmental policy in light of our current and planned future activities.
- build relevant expertise internally to offer advice to our clients including having trained SAP Assessors and undertaking relevant research.
- engage with our local community, especially those in education to promote awareness of construction, the 'physical world' and creating positive sustainable working environments.
- share our expertise with our local community by participating in relevant bodies and organisations that shape our physical environment to build sustainable communities, such as expert design panels and conservation advisory panels for local authorities.
- are active in developing our own knowledge by attending courses and CPD presentations; in internal forums and discussion; and through our training, research and development activities, recorded and shared across the whole team using Teams and Sharepoint.

## *Our approach to projects*

We:

- work with our clients to agree sustainability objectives at the briefing stage of projects.
- aim to review sustainability at each key stage of a project and report on progress-to-date as well as identifying opportunities to increase project sustainability in line with initial objectives.
- work to minimise waste through good design, in terms of materials used and methods of construction, and ensure our clients are fully aware of their legal obligations with regard to waste.
- seek to assess sites for their ecological value and microclimate, and ensure buildings make best use of the natural features of the site including sun, wind and landscape.
- seek to ascertain the potential for local power generation from renewable energy sources locally or on site.
- seek to ensure that biodiversity is protected or enhanced.
- seek to make best use of orientation and shape to reduce the need for artificial forms of conditioning.
- seek to operate a 'right-first-time' culture (through our Quality Management System) for our production information in order to avoid wasteful site reworking.

## **2. Review**

This policy will be reviewed every year or following changes to the relevant legislation.

| Revision | Note  | By  | Date       |
|----------|---|-----|------------|
| -        | First issue   | KD  | 2010       |
| 1        | Change to wiki format   | KD  | 01/12/2014 |
| 2        | Add use of Green Electricity to the 'Way We Run Our Business' | DJD | 01/07/2015 |

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|    |   |     |            |
|----|---|-----|------------|
| 3  | Update Design Philosophy; Remove Code for Sustainable Homes Assessment and add Research; Update the % of renewable energy; Remove reference to incorporating sustainability questions in client feedback and staff personal development plan.   | KB  | 28/11/2016 |
| 4  | Update to renewable sources % and removal of Centre of Excellence   | KB  | 04/12/2017 |
| 5  | Update in line with revised RIBA Environmental Policy toolkit   | KB  | 29/01/2018 |
| 6  | Reviewed - no changes   | JCM | 28/03/2019 |
| 7  | Reviewed. Format updated. Review frequency added.   | KD  | 03/05/2020 |
| 8  | Reviewed - no changes   | JCM | 08/04/2021 |
| 9  | Reviewed - no changes   | JCM | 05/04/2022 |
| 10 | General updates. Amended language to change partnership to collaborative, philosophy to approach, and include training, research and development. Updated to reflect current energy supply arrangements. Updated internal research programme to: training, research and development activities. | MA  | 11/04/2023 |
| 11 | Reviewed - no changes   | JCM | 04/04/2024 |