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origin

Building a Sustainable Future

Origin Housing's sustainability report for 2010

Hello, and welcome to Origin Housing's sustainability report for 2010

I'm very pleased to tell you about some of the work that we've carried out over the last year, to put sustainability at the core of our activities.

We don't view sustainability as an add-on or optional extra, but as a concern that is central to the conduct of our business. As a housing association, a commitment to sustainability influences us in many different ways, such as:

- the design and materials of the homes we build
- the way our homes are run: the energy they use, and waste they produce

- our office and corporate activities, such as the transport and IT we use
- the way we raise environmental awareness among our residents, suppliers and staff.
- the creation of successful and sustainable communities

It is our belief that having an effective sustainability policy should not necessarily cost us more. In fact, by reducing the amount of waste that we produce, and resources that we consume, increased performance on sustainability can help us to make savings, as we become

more efficient. Consideration of our effect on the environment forms a key part of our business planning, and the way that we procure products and services.

I hope that you will continue to take an interest in Origin Housing, and work with us in our efforts to operate sustainably.

Karen Wilson
Chief Executive, Origin Housing



Key achievements for 2010



Origin's offices going greener

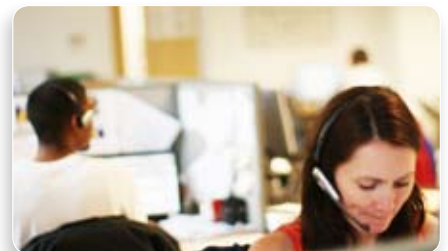


We now have **Green Travel Plans** in place for our main offices, following a survey asking our staff how they travel to work. The Travel Plans provide guidance on travel options and promote healthier and sustainable travel, such as public transport, cycling, car-sharing and walking.

Cycling has been actively promoted through practical courses on safety and maintenance, while our Cycle Scheme assists with the purchase of a new bike. New shower facilities and secure bike racks have been introduced at our offices to make cycling a more attractive option.

As well as the usual recycling bins, we've introduced **'recycling at desks,'** which recycles direct from staff's own personal bins. We recycled 21,800 kg of paper at our Eversholt Street offices in 2010/11, equivalent to a reduction of 24,800kg of CO2.

Electric supplies to all Origin's offices and residential communal areas now supplied from green energy sources.



Improvements in existing homes



Educating and involving residents

Origin makes **practical guidance** available to tenants on ways to reduce carbon emissions and save money.

We require our contractors, whilst carrying out gas servicing, also to **advise residents on energy efficiency** in their homes.

We provide **sustainability training** to residents on our Residents Design Panel, who give us a residents' perspective on new equipment and systems.

We are working with Thames Water to make **free water-saving devices** available to our residents, helping them to reduce their water consumption and water charges.

Together with consultants CEN, we are developing a **Carbon Reduction Strategy** and **sustainability statement**, which will include assessments of our worst-performing buildings in terms of energy efficiency, helping us to target our future investment.

Origin has incorporated **ISO14000** on Environmental Management Systems into our procurement process, helping us to identify and control the environmental impact of the products or services we buy in.

We are continuing to procure white goods with a better environmental rating in our furnished accommodation.

We have also introduced water efficiency measures, including toilet flush limiters, reduced-flow taps and water collection options.

Origin is trialling new technologies to improve the efficiency of existing central boiler systems, reducing emissions and heat loss.



More sustainable new homes



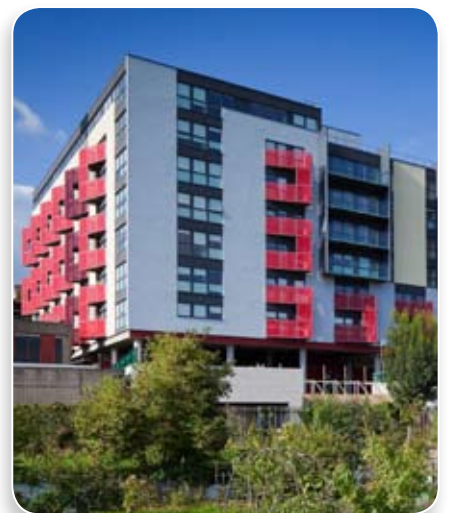
We are building 80 new homes to **Passivhaus construction principles**. We are stopping short of full certification as we consider the significant additional cost in reaching the full standard is not justified by the limited additional performance of the building.

Origin is taking a detailed but pragmatic approach in the use of renewable technologies, to ensure that what we use is practical, cost-effective, durable, easily understood by users, and easily maintained. Our intention is not to engage in flagship projects using vanguard building technologies, but to use trusted equipment and building methods that offer the best solution for each particular housing scheme, whilst minimising their environmental impact.

Over 70% of our current development programme already meets **Level 4** of the **Code for Sustainable Homes**,

ahead of this standard of environmental performance becoming compulsory.

Origin currently uses a wide range of renewable energy systems and building methods. We are currently building 400 homes with photovoltaic cells, 200 homes supplied with energy by Combined Heat and Power boilers and 55 with air exhaust heat pumps. In others, we are installing solar water heating and mechanical ventilation with heat recovery (which reduces condensation and improves the indoor environment).



Sustainable communities



Throughout the year, our **Community Development and Neighbourhood Service** team have been working with residents in local communities on a wide range of **sustainability projects**.



Examples include:

Gardening projects

– for example the Somers Town Gardening Project, which has brought many individuals and groups of different ages and backgrounds together through the Origin Time Bank project. With support and advice from the London Wildlife Trust, a series of small allotments have been created, on which residents and wider community members are encouraged to grow their own food, helping the environment and strengthening the local community.

Improving the built environment

– the previously disused Athlone Community Hall in Camden has been refurbished and re-opened as a venue for community projects, groups and events.

Employment and Training

– we provide training, advice and support to those seeking employment, enabling residents to support themselves financially and increasing their confidence and self-esteem.

4-Kix Football Programme

The award-winning 4-Kix football programme is aimed at young people who may have experienced difficulties and social exclusion in the past. They are given new opportunities to gain experience, qualifications and, in some cases, direct paid employment.



Reducing anti-social behaviour

– we gave families in Barnet training on parenting and supervision skills to reduce the levels of nuisance and anti social behaviour by children.



For the future



Origin's sustainability-related activities in 2011 will include:

Finalising and implementing our Carbon Reduction Strategy

– to improve the environmental performance of our worst-performing homes.

Increasing measurement of Origin's environmental impact and carbon generation

– so that we are able to set more meaningful targets for sustainability performance. Origin has joined the Camden Climate Change Alliance to achieve this.



Monitoring the performance of new development projects

– and the ease of use of new heating/ energy systems by residents and continuing to research the best means to maximise environmental performance of new buildings.

Setting new targets

– for recycling, green procurement and waste in the office environment.

Cost-benefit analysis

– on the best way to incorporate **use of Feed-In-Tariffs** to generate energy in existing buildings, to reduce costs.



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To find out more about Origin Housing's work around sustainability, see www.originhousing.org.uk or call 0800 040 7989.