



**POWERING  
Positive  
Change**

# **Energy and Sustainable Development Strategy 2019–2021**

[choice-housing.org](http://choice-housing.org)

Energy and environmental management is linked to our Mission **‘to enrich lives through great homes and services’**.



## Foreword

Choice Housing have been leaders in the social housing sector in Northern Ireland in the area of Energy and Environmental Management over the past decade. This has been demonstrated by our investment in an Energy Management Team, our history of ground-breaking sustainable housing developments, significant recognition through local and UK awards, the delivery of substantial savings for our customers through procurement and contract management, and our engagement with the wider industry.

Energy and environmental management is directly linked to our Mission ‘to enrich lives through great homes and services’ as we recognise the impact that energy costs and environmental matters can have on our tenants, including the challenge of fuel poverty.

Our previous Energy and Sustainable Development Strategy delivered significant benefits for our customers and it is intended that this Strategy will build upon that success, whilst setting new challenging targets and recognising future potential opportunities.

**Michael McDonnell**  
Group Chief Executive

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## Executive Summary

Our previous Energy and Sustainable Development Strategy outlined our three step approach of reducing the amount of energy we use, purchasing our energy effectively and reducing our impact on the environment. Some of our achievements are shown in **Figure 1** below based on the 2017/18 financial year.

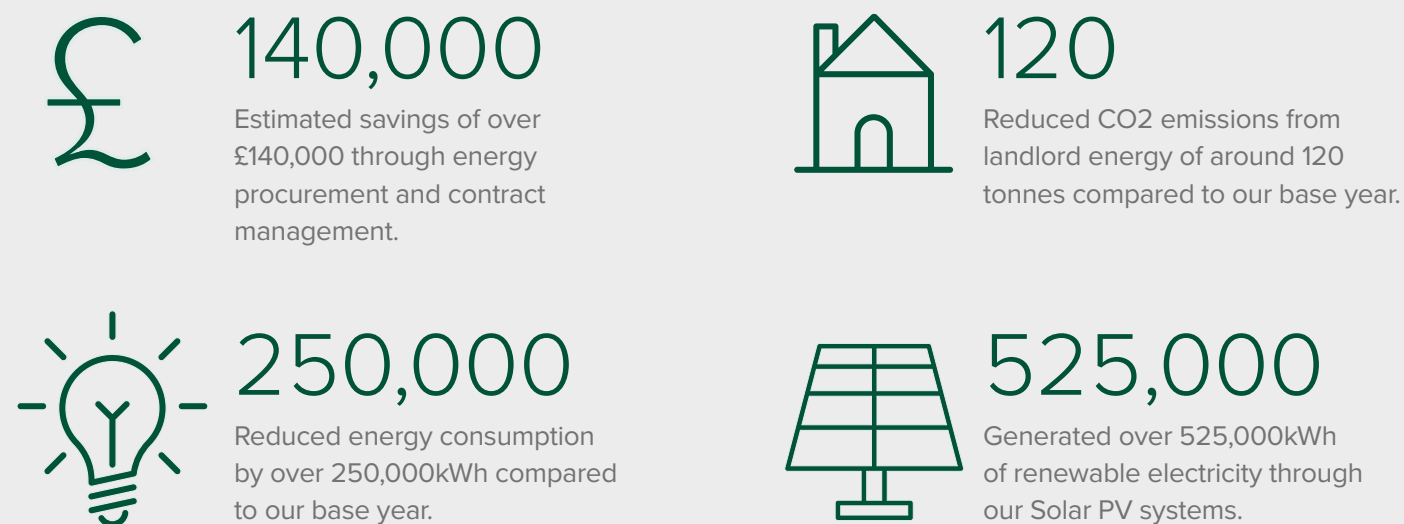


Figure 1

Our sector currently faces numerous economic, political, social and environmental challenges and this Strategy allows us to build upon our previous success in the area of energy and environmental management. By 2021 we will engrain sustainability further within Choice, across the various aspects of our business and all parts of our organisation.

This strategy reflects our continued ambition to lead the sector in this area, with targets in place to demonstrate continual improvement and our desire to embrace innovation. Whilst our strategy sets a clear direction and commitment for the future, it is also intended to facilitate flexibility in order to allow us to adapt to future changes and take advantage of possible opportunities.

Our Energy and Sustainable Development Strategy is clearly aligned to our Corporate Strategy, with targets categorised under our four Strategic Goals of Great Homes, Great Services, Value for Money, and Digital Transformation. This Strategy also links to other areas of our business and aligns with other strategies, which include the following:

- **Development Strategy 2018/19 - 2020/21**
- **Asset Management Strategy 2019/20 - 2020/21**
- **Tenant Involvement Strategy 2017 - 2020**
- **Financial Inclusion Strategy 2017 - 2020**



## Introduction

Choice Housing Ireland Limited is an Industrial and Provident Society registered as a Housing Association and Charity by our regulators, the Department for Communities and the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland. The Association is a social enterprise, has a voluntary membership and all surpluses are reinvested to fulfil our charitable purpose.

Our charitable purpose for over 40 years is 'to benefit the community'. We do this through the provision of social and affordable housing, through the provision of assistance to help house people, and through associated facilities, amenities and services for the 'prevention or relief of poverty or for the relief of those in need'.



Figure 2

Our core values, as shown above in **Figure 2**, underpin all of the work we do, with our approach and objectives aligned to these values. By way of example, we demonstrate that we are trustworthy by taking our landlord energy costs seriously and settings targets to reduce consumption and procuring these costs appropriately to deliver savings. We are customer focused in that we have held energy weeks for our tenants in recent years and also updated the information available to our customers on our website. We are also dynamic in this area as we look at new initiatives such as our 'Preferred Supplier Arrangement' and demonstrate innovation by looking at new technologies and approaches.

There is currently significant uncertainty in the sector in relation to legislation and future potential challenges, but Choice are committed to supporting relevant Government Departments and industry bodies. We will continue to demonstrate leadership in this area and engage with relevant stakeholders and partner organisations.

## Governance and Oversight

**Figure 3** highlights the Governance which is in place in relation to Energy Management, with the Energy and Sustainable Development Strategy managed by the Energy Manager under the responsibility of the Group Director of Development and Assets.

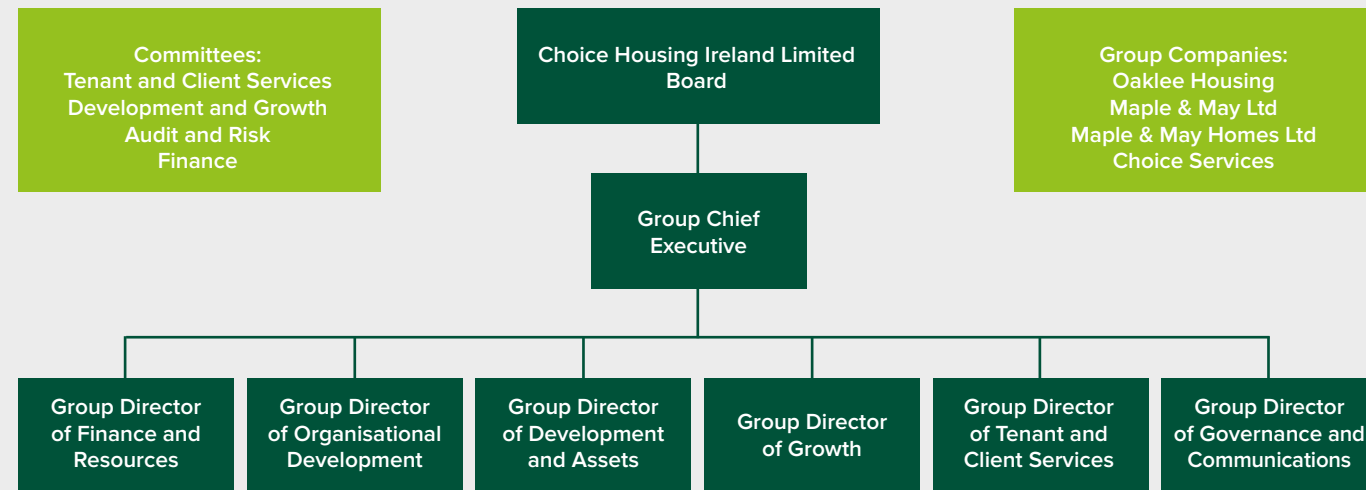


Figure 3

The Group Board has approved the management of Development, Assets and Energy through three teams, which are overseen by the Group Director.

**Development:** Responsible for the development and delivery of our new homes. This includes identifying suitable sites, the planning and development of scheme proposals, construction and project management. This is in line with the Social Housing Development Programme and is focused on achieving best value for money.

**Asset Management:** Responsible for delivery of the planned maintenance programme, stock condition surveys, life cycle component costing, long term investment and major disabled adaptations.

**Energy Management:** Responsible for reducing the amount of energy we use, the cost of energy and our impact upon the environment. This team is also responsible for promoting a culture of energy efficiency within Choice and providing support and advice to customers.

**Figure 4** shows the current structure of the Energy Management Team.

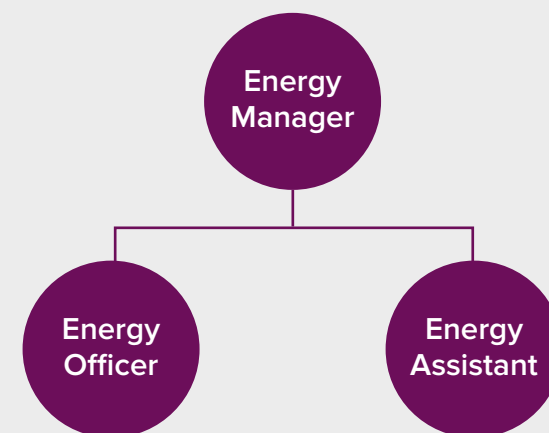


Figure 4

Energy and Environmental Management is a group function and so extends to all parts of our organisation and associated companies, to include Choice Services, Maple and May, and Oaklee Housing. A separate Energy and Sustainable Development Strategy has been developed for Oaklee Housing with a common approach adopted.

Choice Housing currently have around 11,000 homes in Northern Ireland, with annual communal or landlord energy costs in the region of £1.5m, and an environmental impact of over 7,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> in relation to our energy consumption. A summary of energy consumption, cost and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from energy for 2017/18 will be provided during the first year of this strategy and will act as a base year upon which savings will be targeted.

We estimate that energy costs for our tenants are likely to exceed £10m<sup>1</sup>, with potential CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in the region of 100,000 Tonnes<sup>2</sup>. This highlights the importance of not only managing our own energy consumption and costs effectively (with savings passed on to our customers), but also of striving to positively influence our customers in relation to their direct energy costs and their environmental impact. We do this by encouraging our tenants to reduce their energy consumption, consider switching suppliers or reviewing their current arrangements, and by having a benefits entitlement check carried out, all of which will help to alleviate the issue of fuel poverty.

We recognise the challenges which exist in the social housing sector at present, but we are also aware of the changes to the energy sector which may have an impact on our customers. This includes potential future changes in relation to heat networks in the UK, the anticipated growth of technologies such as heat pumps and electric vehicles, and future changes to the electricity grid across the Island of Ireland. Our investment in Energy and Environmental Management ensures that we are ideally placed to respond to these challenges, whilst also capitalising on possible future opportunities for the Association and our customers.

Choice Housing currently have around 11,000 homes in Northern Ireland, with annual communal or landlord energy costs in the region of £1.5m, and an environmental impact of over 7,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> in relation to our energy consumption.



<sup>1</sup> Estimate based on average electricity, heating and hot water costs of over £1,000 per a home.

<sup>2</sup> Estimate based on average CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of over 9 Tonnes per home in Northern Ireland (NI House Condition Survey, 2016).



# Our Approach

Our approach to Energy and Environmental Management involves ‘4 Cogs’ as shown in **Figure 5**. This highlights the symbiotic links between various areas of energy and environmental management and how initiatives can often have multiple benefits. For example, by reducing the amount of energy we use, we also reduce our impact on the environment and our annual energy costs.

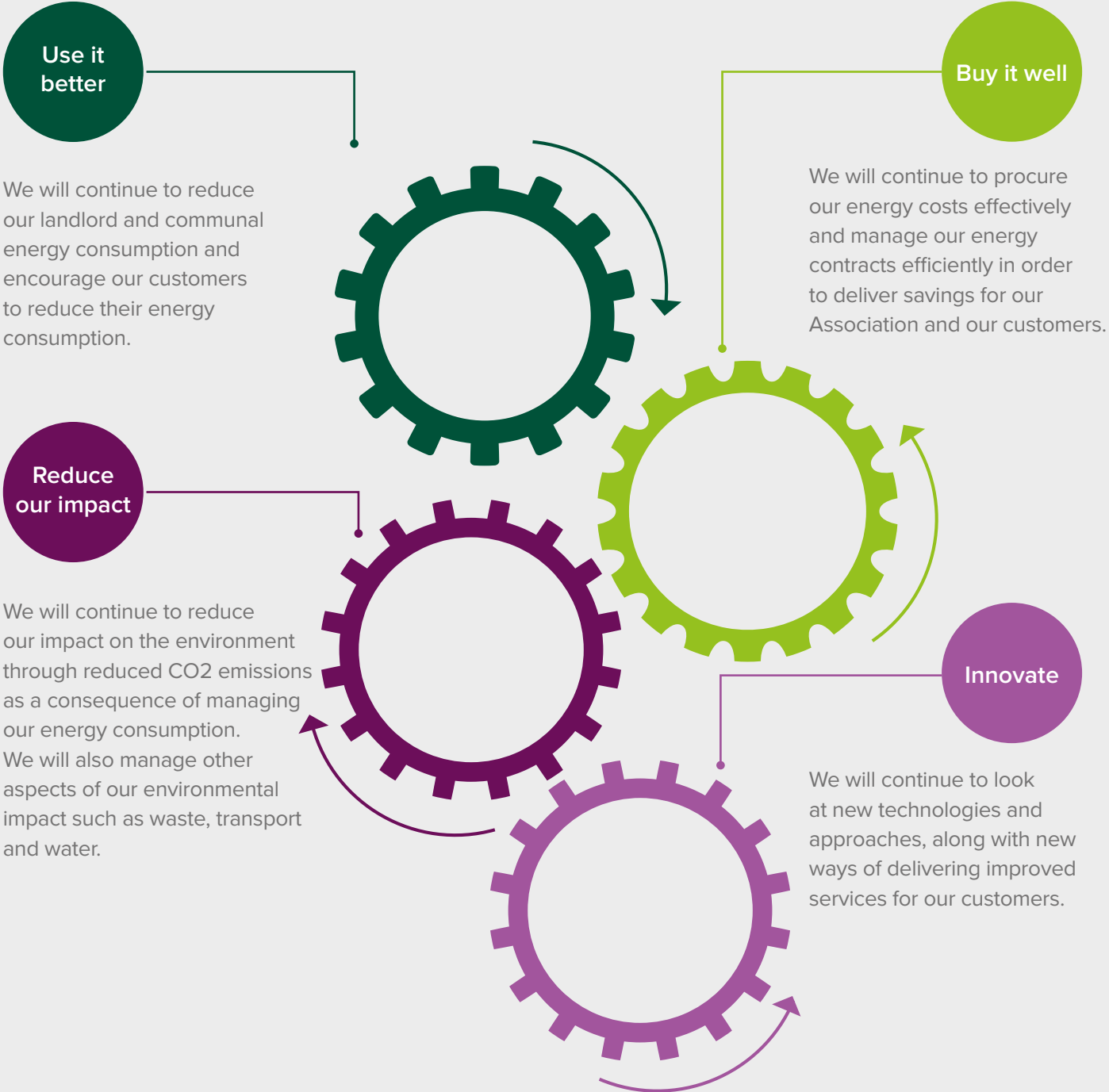


Figure 5

## Our Strategic Themes

# #1 Great Homes

## Strategic Theme: Asset Management

One of our Corporate Strategic Objectives is to provide ‘Great Homes’ and so continued investment in our existing housing stock is vitally important. Each year we have planned maintenance programmes which include energy efficiency measures such as insulation upgrades, replacement heating systems and controls, and low energy lighting.

Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs) are required when homes are built, rented or sold in Northern Ireland, and so we will ensure legal compliance in this area, whilst also using this information to inform future decision making.

Renewable technologies have been installed by Choice in the past, and our existing Solar PV Portfolio delivers an annual income through renewable electricity which is generated and exported to the electricity grid. There is currently a lack of political and financial support to incentivise further investment in renewable energy, but we will continue to monitor this area and any future opportunities.

The Energy Management Team will continue to review our planned maintenance and remodelling projects and provide advice. Our ambition is to achieve an average EPC Energy Efficiency Rating of 80 by 2025 and during this Strategy we aim to achieve an average rating of 77.

We plan to invest £150,000 over the course of this two year strategy, on enhanced energy projects which will deliver further savings for our customers.



### Solar PV Installations at our Sheltered Housing Schemes

Choice currently have around 375 Solar PV systems installed across Northern Ireland and our Energy Management Team maintain this portfolio to ensure systems perform as expected. This large portfolio delivers an annual income from Renewable Obligation Certificates (ROCs) and payments for electricity exported to the electricity grid. Our portfolio generates around 525,000kWh of renewable electricity each year, and is likely to annually save in the region of 250tonnes of CO2.

In 2014 we installed Solar PV systems at 14 of our existing sheltered housing schemes and put in place a financial model to share income with our customers by using these systems to reduce service charges. In 2017/18 this project resulted in savings for our customers of almost £6,000.

# #1 Great Homes

## Strategic Theme: Sustainable Development

Choice have developed some of the most energy efficient and sustainable homes on the Island of Ireland over the last decade, and we have been recognised as industry leaders, with local and UK Awards. We believe that sustainable homes should offer value for money, be simple to use, and should be affordable to heat and ventilate. When designing our new homes we adopt the ‘fabric first’ approach and aim to avoid the unnecessary use of complex technologies.

We have recently been involved in a research project examining future potential building standards, including ‘Nearly Zero-Energy Buildings’ (nZEB), and so we anticipate the introduction of future enhanced building standards in Northern Ireland. We have already developed homes to much higher standards such as Passive House, Level Five of the Code for Sustainable Homes and Zero Carbon, and have monitored performance of these homes and others on the Island of Ireland. We are preparing for future changes by examining the performance of these exemplar homes, reviewing our current approach to development, and seeking opportunities to trial further developments to higher standards. We will also continue to consider opportunities which will improve other aspects of sustainability for our new homes, including waste management, building materials and ecology.

Our new housing developments will be reviewed by our Energy Management Team to examine opportunities such as enhanced standards, reduced costs and improved real life performance (reducing the ‘performance gap’). We will also seek to develop at least one new housing scheme to a higher standard, meeting the requirements of the Department for Communities ‘Energy Efficiency Multiplier’.

In renewing our ‘Preferred Supplier Arrangement’ we will aim to ensure that tenants in our new homes have reduced electricity costs.



### Killynure Green

In 2015 Choice completed our zero carbon development, Killynure Green in Carryduff, which was the first housing scheme in Northern Ireland to meet Level Five of the Code for Sustainable Homes. Choice worked closely with consultants and contractors and actively contributed to the design process, using experience gained from the development of our Passive House scheme and our research project with InnovateUK on Building Performance Evaluation.

In the first two years of occupancy average energy costs at Killynure Green were under £600 per home for electricity, heating and hot water, with this scheme recognised as the Project of the Year (Residential Category) at the CIBSE Building Performance Awards in 2018.



# #2 Great Services

## Strategic Theme: Environmental Management

Environmental management is crucial to ensure legislative requirements are met, our environmental impact is being managed, appropriate policies and procedures are in place and communicated effectively, and there is a goal of continual improvement. Choice have been audited to the Environmental Management System BS8555 at our offices in recent years and we would seek to continue to receive this type of external recognition. We will also seek to examine opportunities to improve the environment we live in and work with relevant organisations involved with environmental management.



### Environmental Management System - BS8555

Choice have sought to receive external recognition of our environmental management practices and for several years we have worked with Business in the Community to achieve the Environmental Management System BS8555 (Level 3) for our offices.

This was renewed once again at the start of 2018 with an external auditor inspecting our approach to environmental management, our goal of continual improvement, and our performance against our targets, which included reducing our energy use, reducing the amount of paper we use and encouraging waste reduction and recycling.

We will aim to continue to receive recognition each year in relation to environmental management at our offices, by being audited to a standard such as BS8555 and meeting targets we have set.

We will consider opportunities to reduce waste and encourage recycling, with pilot initiatives to be held at a sample of housing schemes each year. Water charges will be reviewed with recommendations made, and sustainable transport options will once again be considered and promoted to staff.

# #2 Great Services

## Strategic Theme: Statutory Compliance and Best Practice

Through our Environmental Management System we will ensure that we have a register of applicable legislation and that we have adequate procedures in place to ensure compliance with legislative requirements. We aim to provide an example of best practice in relation to energy and environmental management, exceeding legislative requirements, seeking opportunities to demonstrate innovation and promoting our achievements.

Areas of statutory compliance include, but are not limited to air quality, waste management, water regulations and climate change. A process is in place to ensure we are aware of our legislative requirements and that compliance checks are carried out on a regular basis.

As part of our Environmental Management System we will ensure we have a legal register in place, along with procedures for compliance checks and additional environmental targets highlighting our desire to exceed minimum industry standards or requirements.



### Achievements and Recognition

Choice have demonstrated best practice in relation to energy and environmental management in the last decade, and have received numerous awards, both locally and at UK level, including the following:

- 2018**
  - Winner of the 'Project of the Year – Residential' Category at the UK CIBSE Building Performance Awards.
  - Shortlisted under the 'Central Service Team of the Year' Category at the UK Housing Heroes Awards.
  - Highly commended in the 'Housing Team of the Year' Category at the CIH NI Awards.
- 2017**
  - Shortlisted for the 'Environmental Leadership Award' at the Business in the Community Awards.
  - Shortlisted for the 'Communication Award' at the Energy Institute Awards.
- 2016**
  - Gold Winner' at the UK Green Apple Awards in relation to Sustainable Development.
  - Our Energy Manager was the winner of the 'Best Energy Manager' Category at the Sustainable Ireland Awards.

# #2 Great Services

## Strategic Theme: Education & Support for our Staff

We continually seek to raise awareness of energy and environmental matters with our staff, embedding this culture within our organisation. Our Energy Management Team continue to engage with our staff over time by providing support and advice when required, encouraging energy reduction and providing advice on funding options.

Various approaches are used to support our staff, which includes the use of our staff intranet, emails, posters, staff training events and presentations. All of our new staff receive energy training as part of their induction process and each year we hold activities or training as part of our 'Energy Week'.

This approach to energy management benefits our staff and our Association directly, but also delivers improved customer service for our tenants who interact with our staff.

One of the mediums for providing support and raising awareness is our company intranet and so we will review this each year to ensure up to date advice and information is available. We will also carry out an annual training initiative for all staff and carry out quarterly energy walkabouts at our offices, highlighting any areas for potential improvement.



### Energy Week 2018

In recent years Choice have promoted energy and environmental initiatives to our staff as part of our Energy Week involvement.

During Energy Week 2018 we held a 'Fastest Lap Challenge' at each of our offices, with staff cycling to power cars on a scalextric track. This enabled us to promote our cycle to work scheme, highlight the concept of generating electricity and also encourage staff engagement. Training was also provided on our intranet with tailored advice for different staff roles and daily articles highlighting our various initiatives.

# #2 Great Services

## Strategic Theme: Excellent Customer Service

One of our core values is to be 'customer-focused' and this is reflected in the advice and support we have provided in the past around energy consumption and costs.

Fuel poverty levels in Northern Ireland fell from 42% of households in 2011 to 22% in 2016. Whilst this highlights the benefit of significant investment in energy efficiency in recent years, we are conscious that rising energy prices since 2016 will mean that fuel poverty levels are likely to have risen again.

We aim to help alleviate this for our customers as far as possible by providing relevant support and highlighting the benefits of saving energy, switching energy suppliers or seek better arrangements with existing suppliers, and ensuring that benefits entitlement checks are carried out. The Energy Management Team will continue to work with other departments within Choice, such as our financial inclusion colleagues, and will seek to promote tenant engagement, providing support to our tenants forum. We will also continue to work with relevant external bodies, including those involved in the Northern Ireland Fuel Poverty Coalition.

Each year we will review the information available on our website and any relevant literature to ensure appropriate energy and environmental information is available for our customers. We will also seek to continue to support partner organisations in holding an annual Energy Week in Northern Ireland.

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### Preferred Supplier Arrangement

In line with our core values, Choice have sought to demonstrate that we are dynamic and customer-focused. In 2016 we entered into a 'Preferred Supplier Arrangement' with an electricity supplier in Northern Ireland, following a competitive tender exercise. We understood this to be one of the first arrangements of this type in Northern Ireland, where we were actively seeking an electricity supplier for our new and remodelled homes.

Homes included in this arrangement benefited from a lower unit cost for electricity when compared to the regulated price, but customers were still able to compare the market and switch suppliers. Choice also received a small rebate for each property included within this arrangement, which was able to be re-invested into our housing stock.

During 2017 around 200 homes were included in this arrangement and at the time it was estimated that savings for customers may have been in the region of £12,000.



# #3 Value for Money

## Strategic Theme: Energy Management

It is estimated that Choice spend in the region of £1.5m each year on energy costs, with most of this recharged on to our customers through service charges. These costs include communal and landlord heating, lighting and power costs, along with electricity and heating costs for some individual properties across our housing schemes. Whilst we recognise that energy costs are unavoidable, we understand from our experience that effective energy management ensures that these costs are minimised and opportunities are sought to deliver savings for our customers. Choice continue to be the only Housing Association in Northern Ireland with an Energy Management Team, which evidences our commitment to demonstrate our core values of being trustworthy, customer-centred and dynamic.



### Heating Upgrade at Elmgrove Manor

The Energy Management Team continually review energy consumption and look for opportunities to make savings to help us meet our targets, but crucially to deliver savings for our customers.

In 2017 Choice carried out heating improvement measures at Elmgrove Manor, including installing additional insulation to pipework within each home, fitting thermostatic radiator valves to give customers more control of their heating, and trialling a heating additive for the communal heating system.

The result of carrying out these measures was that comfort levels within this housing scheme improved and customers have had more control of temperatures within their homes. In the 12 months following the heating upgrade it is estimated that natural gas savings of almost 10% have been achieved, when compared to the previous 12 months.

As a means of measuring our performance we have set a target of reducing energy consumption by 3% at our housing schemes and offices over the duration of this Strategy, when compared to our base year of 2017/18.

We also intend to develop an energy database which allows our front line staff to access information on the energy consumption at each of their schemes. By providing information in this way it will inform and empower our staff to look for further opportunities to reduce energy consumption and costs for our customers.

# #3 Value for Money

## Strategic Theme: Energy Procurement & Contract Management

Our Energy Management Team work alongside our Procurement Team and aim to obtain the best possible energy contracts, covering electricity, natural gas and heating oil. We also regularly review our tariffs to ensure these are appropriate, and our Energy Management Team are responsible for validating energy invoices to ensure accuracy. As a result we have been able to deliver significant annual savings for our customers, including over £140,000 in 2017/18. This links to the strategic theme of energy management and our core values of being customer-focused and trustworthy.

By proactively managing our energy costs in this manner we are also demonstrating our overall drive to deliver value for money for our business and our customers.

We will aim to continue to deliver savings of 5% as part of our annual procurement activities, when compared to regulated or average market prices. We will also continue to seek additional savings through ongoing contract management.

We will seek to renew our 'Preferred Supplier Arrangement' and examine opportunities to extend this initiative to deliver further savings for our customers.



### Recent Energy Contracts and Contract Management

The Energy Management Team in Choice works closely with our Procurement Team each year to procure our energy contracts effectively.

In 2017/18 we procured our new electricity contracts for one year and at that time we estimated a saving of almost 13% against market or average electricity prices. This equated to a financial saving of over £100,000 at that time, however market prices have risen significantly in the following 12 months and so our fixed price contract has meant that further savings have been delivered. Choice also renewed our participation in a two year UK Framework Agreement for heating oil, with estimated savings of around 5% against market prices, or approximately £4,000.

During 2017/18 we also validated our energy invoices and identified savings in the region of £30,000 through this process.

At the start of 2018/19 we procured our natural gas contracts and fixed prices for a two year period. Savings at the time were estimated at almost 4% against average market prices, equating to around £46,000 over the contract term, although these savings have already increased due to rising market prices.





### #3 Value for Money

**Strategic Theme:**  
**Leadership and Engagement**

Our Energy Management Team are uniquely positioned to represent the Housing Association sector in Northern Ireland and have assisted our industry body The Northern Ireland Federation of Housing Associations (NIFHA) on the Home Energy Conservation Authority (HECA) panel, and also have represented the sector at Energy Managers Forum meetings, with local councils. We have worked with other bodies outside of our sector to consider future opportunities and it is hoped that we will be able to continue to represent energy and environmental management within our sector and also consider opportunities to offer our expertise to other organisations.



Energy Week 2017

In 2017 our Energy Management Team worked with a number of partner organisations including the Energy Saving Trust, The Consumer Council, Bryson Energy, NEA, NIHE, the Improving Benefit Uptake Team, NIFHA and various energy providers.

We helped to arrange a series of nine energy roadshows in shopping centres across Northern Ireland, and during the same week we visited a large number of our housing schemes to offer direct support and advice to our customers.

Each year we will continue to work with partner organisations to hold an annual Energy Week, whilst also developing and delivering an annual stakeholder engagement plan to demonstrate that we are representing the needs of our customers and the sector.

We will also learn from other organisations and seek at least one opportunity each year to offer our expertise to other organisations.



# #4 Digital Transformation

## Strategic Theme: Innovation

Choice have been involved in a number of research projects with support from bodies such as InnovateUK, The Department for Business, Enterprise and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), and local Universities. Alongside renewable technologies and LED lighting we have trialled innovative heating controls and heating additives for some of our communal heating schemes, and we are continuing to look for future opportunities in areas such as ‘Demand Side Management’ (DSM), with the expectation that we will install technologies such as battery storage in the future.



### Research

Choice have been involved with numerous partner organisations in carrying out research projects, either as a lead partner or as part of a team.

In 2014 we completed our study into the performance of our Passive House scheme, the first social housing scheme in Ireland to be certified to this standard. This formed part of InnovateUK’s Building Performance Evaluation Programme. We subsequently were involved as a partner in a further InnovateUK research project, monitoring the energy performance of 10 of our homes.

More recently our Energy Manager has completed his MSc in Energy Management and Renewable Energy and chose to research future potential energy standards for new social housing developments in Northern Ireland.

We have also recently been involved in a research project examining opportunities in relation to ‘Demand Side Response’ with support from the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS).

We plan to invest £150,000 over the course of this two year strategy, on enhanced energy projects and we will aim to pilot at least one technology during each year of this strategy, working with partner organisations where applicable.

We will continue to carry out an annual review of technologies and financial models to identify future opportunities.

Our  
Targets

## Our Targets

We have identified 25 targets which we aim to achieve under this strategy, with these targets highlighted below and aligned with our Corporate Strategic Goals.

GREAT HOMES			
TARGET		YEAR 1	YEAR 2
1	Review planned maintenance and stock remodelling projects and provide advice in relation to energy and environmental management.	✓	✓
2	Review planned capital investments to ensure the best approach is being taken in relation to energy efficiency, value for money, lifecycle costs and customer satisfaction.	✓	✓
3	Provide Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs) as required and use our EPCs as a tool to identify future areas for improvement. Our ambition is to achieve an average EPC Energy Efficiency Rating of 80 by 2025 and during this Strategy we hope to achieve an average rating of 77.	✓	✓
4	We will invest £150,000 over the course of this two year strategy, on enhanced energy projects which will deliver further savings for our customers.	✓	✓
5	Develop at least one new housing scheme to a higher energy standard and monitor performance.		✓

GREAT SERVICES			
TARGET		YEAR 1	YEAR 2
6	Achieve an Environmental Management System for our Offices.	✓	✓
7	Achieve all of the targets we have set within our Environmental Management System.	✓	✓
8	Look for opportunities to reduce waste and encourage recycling. Pilot initiatives at three housing schemes each year.	✓	✓
9	Review our intranet content to ensure relevant energy and environmental information is available for staff.	✓	✓
10	Review our website content and literature to ensure relevant energy and environmental information is available for our customers.	✓	✓
11	Work with partner organisations to support a Northern Ireland Energy Week.	✓	✓
12	Ensure that we have a 'Preferred Supplier Arrangement' in place and seek opportunities to extend this initiative.	✓	✓
13	Deliver an annual training initiative for all staff.	✓	✓
14	Promote sustainable transport options for the Association and for our staff. Also examine sustainable transport options for our customers.	✓	✓



VALUE FOR MONEY			
TARGET		YEAR 1	YEAR 2
15	Carry out a review of our energy consumption to identify our Base Year.	✓	
16	Reduce energy consumption at our schemes and offices by 3% compared to our Base Year.	2%	3%
17	Deliver a saving of 5% on energy costs through smart energy procurement. Also manage contracts and validate invoices to ensure additional cost savings are delivered.	✓	✓
18	Carry out a review of water consumption and charges, liaising with NI Water. Outline any recommendations to reduce consumption or cost.	✓	
19	Manage our Solar PV portfolio efficiently and seek to obtain at least 95% of annual potential income.	✓	✓
20	Carry out quarterly energy walkabouts at our offices and make recommendations for improvements.	✓	✓
21	Develop and deliver an annual stakeholder engagement plan to demonstrate that we are representing the needs of our customers and the sector.	✓	✓
22	Seek at least one opportunity each year to offer our expertise in the areas of energy and environmental management to external organisations.	✓	✓

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION			
TARGET		YEAR 1	YEAR 2
23	Carry out an annual review of technologies and financial models, identifying future opportunities and making recommendations.	✓	✓
24	Pilot at least one technology each year, working alongside partner organisations where applicable.	✓	✓
25	Develop an energy consumption database, splitting energy consumption data by areas and communicating performance to empower front line staff.	✓	

## How we will deliver our Strategy

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### Monitoring of Performance

We will create an annual working plan which will be used to identify when our targets will be met within each year. Regular reviews will be carried out, with reports to be provided to the Group Director of Development and Assets, the Senior Management Team, the Development and Growth Committee, and our Board as appropriate. This Strategy has been formulated to align with our Corporate Strategy and other Strategies within the Association, and will be reviewed annually to ensure it continues to be aligned in this manner. Whilst specific targets have been set, this Strategy also acts as a framework and we will seek to examine other potential opportunities to deliver benefits to Choice and our customers.



### Resources

The Group Director of Development and Assets is responsible for the delivery of this strategy, with the Energy Manager responsible for implementing this strategy along with support from the Energy Management Team and other staff throughout the organisation. Choice maintain a commitment to ensure that adequate resources are in place within the Energy Management Team, and across the organisation, to achieve the ambitious targets outlined in this strategy, and to ensure that staff are adequately resourced and trained.



### Equality and Diversity

We have undertaken an Equality Impact Assessment to consider how this Energy and Sustainable Development Strategy will impact our tenants, service users and staff. This is particularly relevant to our diverse stakeholder base. The assessment will consider the effects this strategy may have on people falling into the Northern Ireland Equality Commission's nine groupings.



### Funding

The targets and initiatives of the Energy and Sustainable Development Strategy will be funded in the main through the Association's reserves and rents. Where appropriate, we will seek grant funding and all opportunities to obtain external funding will be explored and recommendations proposed to management. In particular, options for investment where there is a financial payback will be explored along with alternative financial models.





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TOUCH

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**housing**

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Energy and Environmental Management is a group function and so extends to all parts of our organisation and associated companies, to include Choice Services, Maple and May, and Oaklee Housing.

A separate Energy and Sustainable Development Strategy has been developed for Oaklee Housing with a common approach adopted. For more information please visit **[www.oaklee.ie](http://www.oaklee.ie)**