



Sustainability Strategy

2026–2030



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Our Purpose

Together with our communities, we create affordable homes and great neighbourhoods that people are proud to live in.



←
Eastlight homes;
and resident
Bobbie

Introduction

This second iteration of Eastlight’s Sustainability Strategy is shaped by a very different environment to the one we faced in 2022 when our first strategy was published.

Regulatory expectations have strengthened through the Social Housing (Regulation) Act, Awaab’s Law and the Building Safety Act, placing greater emphasis on the condition, performance and safety of our homes. At the same time, rising costs, market uncertainty and shifting government policy mean we must balance ambition with affordability and make clearer choices about where our investment will have the greatest impact.

“We are Sustainable” is one of Eastlight’s seven corporate principles and this strategy reflects our commitment to ensuring that environmental responsibility delivers real benefits for residents, helping to create homes that are warmer, healthier and more affordable to live in.

In 2024/25, our total carbon footprint was dominated by Scope 3 emissions, which accounted for 93% of the total, largely from embodied carbon in developing new homes. Understanding where our emissions arise allows us to target investment effectively, prioritising interventions that will have the greatest impact for residents by reducing fuel poverty, improving comfort and making homes warmer and healthier.

Reflecting on both our progress and regulatory expectations, 80.0% of Eastlight’s homes are now* at EPC-C, up from 62.8% when the previous strategy was developed in 2022. We remain committed to achieving EPC-C across all properties by 2030, in line with the Regulator of Social Housing’s expectations on energy efficiency and decarbonisation.

This strategy is intentionally focused on the environmental aspects of sustainability. As a regulated social housing provider, our social purpose and strong governance arrangements are already embedded in our operating model and addressed through separate strategies, frameworks and policies. Here, we concentrate on the environmental areas where Eastlight can drive meaningful change, guided by our Think Customer principle: improving energy efficiency, reducing carbon impact and supporting healthier, warmer homes that are affordable and comfortable to live in.

Building on improved insight into our homes, our second carbon audit and our ongoing commitment to the Sustainability Reporting Standard, the 2026 Strategy sets out a practical, evidence-led approach. It strengthens compliance, targets investment where it matters most, and takes measured steps beyond compliance where this supports long-term resilience for Eastlight and the communities we serve.

*As at 31 March 2026

Scope & Rationale

The scope of this Sustainability Strategy reflects Eastlight’s role as a regulated social housing provider and the areas where environmental action will have the greatest and most meaningful impact.

While sustainability is often framed through the full Environmental, Social & Governance (ESG) lens, our social purpose and governance responsibilities are firmly embedded in our regulatory framework, corporate strategies and operating policies. They are not replicated here.

Instead, this strategy focuses on the environmental factors that influence the safety, quality and long-term performance of our homes and communities. It covers how we reduce the environmental impact of building, maintaining and living in our homes; how we respond to climate change and extreme weather; and how we prioritise investment to improve energy efficiency, reduce carbon emissions and support healthier living environments for residents.

The strategy also sets out the rationale for Eastlight’s level of ambition. In a context of rising regulatory expectations, cost pressures, policy uncertainty and the findings from our 2025 carbon audit, we must be precise about where our efforts and resources will deliver the most benefit. This includes clarifying our approach to existing homes, new development, embodied carbon, and the technology and data improvements required to support decision-making.

At its core, this strategy provides a framework that enables Eastlight to meet its statutory obligations while taking measured, evidence-based steps beyond compliance where this strengthens long-term resilience for our homes, our organisation and communities.

Objectives



Warm Homes, Lower Bills
Improve the energy efficiency of our existing homes



Building Net Zero Ready
Deliver Net Zero ready, low-carbon new homes



Smarter Operations
Reduce carbon emissions across Eastlight and our supply chain



Preserving Resources, Protecting Nature
Enhance water efficiency and maximise biodiversity across our homes and communities



Empowering Communities
Support customers and communities to live sustainably and thrive



Accountable Action
Strengthen governance, data and insight to drive accountable, evidence-led decisions



Warm Homes, Lower Bills: Improve the energy efficiency of our existing homes

Our existing homes will meet evolving energy standards, reducing fuel poverty and improving comfort for residents.

Ensure essential insulation and fabric standards for lasting efficiency, prioritising retrofit measures that deliver long-term efficiency gains while minimising technical risk.

By 2030, all properties that can achieve EPC-C with reasonable investment will do so, with any hard-to-treat homes excluded in line with emerging guidance.



Building Net Zero Ready: Deliver Net Zero ready, low-carbon new homes

All new Eastlight-led developments will be low-carbon and Net Zero ready.

Transition away from gas boilers, adopt renewable heating technologies, and deliver homes that meet at least EPC-B, with ambition for EPC-A where feasible.

Explore zero-energy-bill and ultra-low-energy home models through pilot schemes focused on customer affordability, comfort and long-term carbon savings.



Smarter Operations: Reduce carbon emissions across Eastlight and our supply chain

Reduce emissions from offices, fleet and our supply chain, embedding sustainability across all operational and supply-chain decisions.

Using data-driven processes, we will prioritise low-carbon options, hold suppliers accountable and ensure measurable reductions across our organisation.

Our Sustainability Team of Champions will empower colleagues to drive change on the ground, hold us accountable and embed sustainability in everyday decision-making.



Preserving Resources, Protecting Nature: Enhance water efficiency and maximise biodiversity across our homes and communities

Embed water efficiency and biodiversity standards across all homes and developments by integrating water-saving technologies, improving water recycling and protecting or enhancing natural habitats and green spaces.

Deliver homes and communities that are resilient, environmentally responsible and contribute to thriving local ecosystems.



Empowering Healthy Communities: Support customers and communities to live sustainably and thrive

Support residents and communities to live more sustainably through guidance, tools, engagement programmes and education that help reduce energy and water consumption, lower household costs and benefit the environment.



Accountable Action: Strengthen governance, data and insight to drive accountable, evidence-led decisions

Strengthen governance, improve data quality and embed insight-driven decision-making.

Maintaining compliance with the Sustainability Reporting Standard and enhancing carbon audit processes, we will ensure that investment decisions deliver measurable carbon reductions and sustainable outcomes.

Establish numerical targets for reducing environmental impact (carbon footprint, energy consumption, water usage, waste generation) and define clear, measurable sustainability KPIs aligned to strategic objectives.



An energy efficient Eastlight home at Thaxted

Monitoring KPIs & Benchmarking

ESG performance is reported annually in our ESG report through 46 measures across 12 themes in the Sustainability Reporting Standard.

In addition to ESG reporting, our Board, Customer Influence Committee (CIC), Development & Asset Management Committee (DAM) and Audit & Risk Committee (ARC) monitor core sustainability KPIs to track progress on energy efficiency, low-carbon development, retrofit activity, operational emissions and climate resilience. Key metrics include:

Performance indicator	Board	CIC	DAM	ARC	F&T
% of properties at EPC-C or above	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Number of homes retrofitted per year	✓	✓	✓		
% of Eastlight properties upgraded from EPC-C or below to EPC-B or above through targeted retrofit measures			✓		
% of new homes at EPC-B or above	✓		✓		
% of new homes meeting Future Homes Standard/NZC ready	✓		✓		
% of new homes with a heat source other than gas	✓	✓	✓		
Embodied carbon per m ² (new build)		✓	✓		
% of construction waste diverted from landfill		✓	✓		
Tonnes CO ₂ e from operations (fleet and business travel)	✓				
% of fleet electric or ultra-low emission	✓				
% reduction in fleet emissions year-on-year	✓				
% of office and operational waste recycled	✓				
% of development CapEx meeting lender-defined sustainability criteria	✓				✓
% of finance linked to sustainability		✓	✓		✓
% of stock with completed flood and overheating risk assessments			✓	✓	

Regulatory Frameworks & Legislation

Legislation:

- Climate Change Act 2008 (as amended)
- Housing and Planning Act 2016
- Housing and Regeneration Act 2008
- Levelling-Up and Regeneration Act 2023
- Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023
- Equality Act 2010

Regulation:

- Consumer Standard – The Safety and Quality Standard
- Decent Homes Standard
- Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)
- Future Homes Standard (England)
- Building Regulations – Part L and Part F

Reporting and voluntary frameworks:

- Sustainability Reporting Standard for Social Housing (SRS)

Value for Money

Delivering our sustainability objectives in a way that represents strong value for money is fundamental to Eastlight’s approach.

We recognise that our investment is funded primarily through residents’ rent and service charge contributions, and we therefore take seriously our responsibility to ensure that sustainability related decisions are affordable, proportionate and deliver clear benefits for residents, the organisation and the wider environment.

Our approach to value for money in sustainability is aligned with the Regulator of Social Housing’s Value for Money and Rent Standard and focuses on achieving the best balance between cost, quality and long-term outcomes. In practice, this means prioritising interventions that reduce whole-life costs, improve the energy efficiency and resilience of our homes, and mitigate future regulatory, financial and climate-related risks.

When making investment decisions, we consider not only the upfront capital cost but also the long-term financial, environmental and social return, including reduced energy consumption, lower maintenance liabilities, improved resident comfort, and contributions to tackling fuel poverty. Where available, we actively seek to maximise external funding and grant opportunities to support delivery, reduce the overall cost of investment and minimise the financial impact on residents.

Value for money is further strengthened through robust procurement and contract management, ensuring that our supply chain deliver high-quality, sustainable solutions at competitive cost. We will monitor performance and outcomes to ensure that sustainability investments deliver measurable benefits, remain affordable, and continue to align with our corporate priorities and regulatory obligations.

Through this approach, Eastlight aims to embed sustainability in a way that is financially responsible, transparent, and focused on delivering lasting value for current and future residents.

Risk Management

Strategic Risk:

Climate Change and Sustainability, Customer Experience, Data Management and Insights, Organisational Capacity and Resilience, Financial Instability, Financing, Development (Cost and Delivery), People Health and Safety, Health and Safety (Building Safety).

Operational Risk:

Operations owned, with clear links to risks in other business areas.

Supporting Strategies & Policies

Strategies:

- Value for Money
- New Homes
- Asset Management

Policies:

- Estate Management
- Aids & Adaptations
- Damp & Mould
- Disposal
- Asbestos
- Asbestos Management Plan
- Financial Regulations

Governance

Executive Lead:

Leadership of Strategy:

- Chief Property Officer
- Head of Asset Management
- Head of Development
- Head of People & Organisational Development
- Head of Finance
- Head of Treasury
- Head of Landlord Compliance & Assurance
- Head of Housing – Neighbourhoods
- Head of Data & Performance


Board:


Development & Asset Management Committee:


Customer Influence Committee:


- Annual strategy update
- 6 monthly strategy updates
- 6 monthly strategy updates.


Appendix 1: Delivery Plan


Pillar	Project Name & Summary	Project Measure & Target	26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30	30-31
 <p>Warm Homes, Lower Bills</p>	<p>Our existing homes will meet evolving energy standards, reduce fuel poverty and improve comfort.</p>	<p>1. Develop a property-level pathway showing current EPC, target rating, measures required and delivery timing. Targeting early investment at homes with lowest EPCs and customers at highest fuel poverty risk.</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓	
		<p>2. Introduce SAP overheating risk modelling for all retrofit schemes and high-risk archetypes</p>			✓		
	<p>Ensure essential insulation and fabric standards for lasting efficiency, prioritising retrofit measures that deliver long-term efficiency gains while minimising technical risk.</p>	<p>3. Develop Eastlight’s standard retrofit specification prioritising insulation, airtightness and ventilation to support low carbon technologies.</p>		✓			
		<p>4. Introduce a technical assurance process to minimise performance gaps and unintended consequences.</p>		✓			
	<p>By 2030, all properties that can achieve EPC-C with reasonable investment will do so, with any hard-to-treat homes excluded in line with emerging guidance.</p>	<p>5. Deliver a funded, phased retrofit programme ensuring all properties meet EPC-C by 2030 (with agreed permitted exclusions).</p>	✓				
		<p>6. Secure and manage SHDF, ECO and other external funding.</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		<p>7. Integrate sustainability investment into the 30 year business plan.</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Pillar	Project Name & Summary	Project Measure & Target	26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30	30-31
 <p>Building Net Zero Ready</p>	<p>All new Eastlight-led developments will be low-carbon and Net Zero ready.</p>	<p>8. Adopt a clear internal standard aligned to Future Homes Standard and EPC-B (stretch target EPC-A where viable).</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		<p>9. Introduce whole-life and embodied carbon assessments at design stage.</p>			✓		
		<p>10. Mandatory flood risk, overheating and climate adaptation assessments for all new builds and design mitigation embedded into specifications.</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		<p>11. Standardise low carbon heating solutions (e.g. heat pumps, communal systems where appropriate).</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	<p>Transition away from gas boilers, adopt renewable heating technologies, and deliver homes that meet at least EPC-B, with ambition for EPC-A where feasible.</p>						
	<p>Explore zero-energy-bill and ultra-low-energy home models through pilot schemes focused on customer affordability, comfort and long-term carbon savings.</p>	<p>12. Deliver a small number of demonstrator homes to trial integrated low-carbon technologies and funding models, track real customer energy bills and performance, and embed learning into future design standards.</p>		✓	✓		

Pillar	Project Name & Summary	Project Measure & Target	26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30	30-31	
 <p>Smarter Operations</p>	Reduce emissions from offices, fleet and our supply chain, embedding sustainability across all operational and supply-chain decisions.	13. Reduce carbon emissions from fleet.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
		14. Introduce EV charging strategy for hubs.	✓					
		15. Reduce carbon emissions from business travel and employee commuting through refreshed employee offer supporting low carbon travel (EVs, public transport, active travel).	✓					
	Using data-driven processes, we will prioritise low-carbon options, hold suppliers accountable, and ensure measurable reductions across our organisation.	16. Sustainability requirements embedded into procurement and contracts.		✓				
		17. Improved contractor reporting on mileage, fuel use and emissions.		✓	✓	✓	✓	
		18. Introduce reuse and recycling requirements for materials and equipment.	✓					
Our Sustainability Team of Champions will empower colleagues to drive change on the ground, hold us accountable, and embed sustainability in everyday decision-making.	19. Champion-led initiatives across teams to identify, implement and monitor low-carbon improvements in day-to-day operations.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		

Pillar	Project Name & Summary	Project Measure & Target	26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30	30-31	
 <p>Preserving Resources, Protecting Nature</p>	Embed water efficiency and biodiversity standards across all homes and developments by integrating water-saving technologies, improving water recycling, and protecting or enhancing natural habitats and green spaces.	20. Develop a central biodiversity and tree survey database.			✓			
		21. Install smart water meters in hubs and use data to identify and reduce waste.			✓			
		22. Explore partnerships with water and environmental agencies to reduce customer water costs, improve flood resilience, and enhance biodiversity through targeted collaboration on water-saving, drainage and nature-based solutions.	✓	✓				
	Deliver homes and communities that are resilient, environmentally responsible, and contribute to thriving local ecosystems.	23. Improve recycling facilities and guidance across estates.					✓	✓
		24. Work with contractors to reduce construction and operational waste.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	25. Map stock against flood and overheating risk (low/medium/high) and validate risk profile with insurers and integrate into asset planning.		✓					

Pillar	Project Name & Summary	Project Measure & Target	26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30	30-31
 <p>Empowering Healthy Communities</p>	<p>Support residents and communities to live more sustainably through guidance, tools, engagement programmes and education that help reduce energy and water consumption, lower household costs and benefit the environment.</p>	<p>26. Assess demand and feasibility of EV chargers on estates and pilot installations in priority locations.</p>			✓		
		<p>27. Tailored communications aligned to retrofit works.</p>	✓				
		<p>28. Clear guidance on energy use, water efficiency and waste reduction, supported with customer campaigns.</p>	✓				

Pillar	Project Name & Summary	Project Measure & Target	26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30	30-31
 <p>Accountable Action</p>	<p>Strengthen governance, improve data quality and embed insight-driven decision-making.</p> <p>Maintaining compliance with the Sustainability Reporting Standard and enhancing carbon audit processes, we will ensure that investment decisions deliver measurable carbon reductions and sustainable outcomes.</p> <p>Establish numerical targets for reducing environmental impact (carbon footprint, energy consumption, water usage, waste generation) and define clear, measurable sustainability KPIs aligned to strategic objectives.</p>	<p>29. Establish robust datasets for energy, carbon, water and waste with clear ownership and assurance processes.</p>			✓		
		<p>30. Maintain compliance with the Sustainability Reporting Standard (SRS) and enhance carbon audit and verification processes.</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		<p>31. Explore the business benefits and need for an environmental management system (EMS) and ISO 14001 with recommendation to EMT.</p>			✓		
		<p>32. Establish methods for collecting and collating data on waste from operations and contractors.</p>			✓		
		<p>33. Establish numerical targets for carbon, energy, water and waste.</p>			✓		

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