Sustainability Policy

Our contribution to sustainable development

The construction and utilities industry can have a huge impact on sustainable development. During the construction stage, small actions can greatly affect the sustainability of the finished project. A 'lean' construction approach can saveresources and be more sustainable.

Construction, building materials and associated professional services together account for some 10% of Gross Domestic Product and employ around 1.5 million people. The construction industry is responsible for 10% of the UK's total emissions of CO^2, with a further 50% resulting from the use of buildings. The industry generates 70 million tonnes of waste per annum, and is the most frequent industrial polluter.

The construction industry can therefore contribute to sustainable development in a number of ways:

- By delivering services that improve the health and well being of users, as well as enabling them to lead more sustainable lives.
- By using materials that have low energy intensity and minimise environmental damage in their extraction, production, construction, occupation and dismantling of the building.
- By providing employment and stimulating the economy.
- By minimising use of natural resources and energy during the construction and operational phases.

We are a Considerate Constructor

We are all involved in either the process or products of construction at some point, but the main stake holders are construction workers, local residents, shareholders and clients. One way of demonstrating our commitment to these stakeholders is through the considerate contractors scheme.

This is a national initiative to improve the image of construction through better management and presentation. The scheme is a voluntary code of practice and is driven by the industry.

Members of the scheme must commit to a seven-point Code of Considerate Practice that includes:

Be considerate – We think of those affected by the construction process and consider the needs of traders, businesses, site personal and visitors, pedestrians, shoppers, the general public and the environment in general. We also consider the needs of those with sight, hearing or mobility difficulties.

Be environmentally aware - We keep noise to a minimum, select and use resources carefully ensuring local resources are used where possible. We manage our waste, avoid pollution and recycle surplus materials.
We use materials with low embodied energy, those that are produced with renewable resources and processes that minimise harm to the environment.

Be clean – We keep the site clean and in good order. Temporary barriers, lights and warnings are kept clean and in safe condition.
We do not allow waste and surplus material to build up or spill into the neighbouring environment. On relevant sites mud, dust, spillages and debris are kept to an absolute minimum.

Be a good neighbour – We consult with local people, including adjacent traders and businesses regarding programming and site activities and we keep in contact throughout the project. We also provide site information and viewing facilities where practical.

Be respectful - Rude behaviour will not be tolerated. Pride in management and the appearance of the site and the surrounding environment is shown at all times.

Be safe - All operations and vehicle movements are carried out with care for the safety of passers-by, neighbours and site personnel. No building activity should be a security risk to others.

Be responsible - All site personnel, specialist sub-contractors, drivers and any other persons working on the site understand and implement the obligations of the Considerate Constructors Code. And we regularly monitor compliance with it.

All our participating schemes benefit from improved relations with local residents, enhanced reputations and the opportunity to enter the site for awards for excellence.

Every construction project is eligible to join the scheme at any stage, from inception to completion and participating sites are monitored to assess compliance with the code.

We use local materials and labour

Although materials are often specified prior to the construction phase, we believe local materials should be selected wherever possible to stimulate the local economy and reduce the transport required.

Re-using site material: the most 'local' material you can have is already on site. Where there is demolition work, we try to build re-use into the construction plan. This avoids the increased costs of exporting demolition materials as waste, then importing other materials for fill and hardcore.

Local stone, timber, brick and other materials : Using local materials also enhances the local nature of the project and aid integration with surrounding buildings.

Hiring locally: Using local labour keeps the wealth generated by the project in the local area, and helps local people to accept and support the project. Travel to and from the site is also reduced.

We choose materials carefully

The selection of building materials, generally at the design stage, should prioritise those with low embodied energy, those produced using renewable resources and environmentally benign processes.

We suggest that the embodied energy of the building should be assessed as a whole - typically a material of low energy intensity will be one that is nearby, naturally occurring and / or a by-product of other local activity.

High energy materials can be justified if a small quantity can facilitate the use of a large quantity of low energy materials in the rest of the building, e.g. stains for coatings to prevent the decay and degradation of timber.

Environmental Management Champion's

We believe that sustainability should be embedded in the development process, from the design stage, through construction to handover. The whole development team should be committed to the environmental aims of the project. We designate an 'environmental champion' to carry through environmental issues from design, through construction and onto the occupation of the building. They have several roles:

Information - although operation and maintenance manuals must exist on site, many are too long and technical. The Environmental Champion helps to ensure the sustainable aims of the project are implemented by producing aCode of Conduct, to guide the site manager and workers and a Building Users Guide for the end tenant or occupier.They should cover all aspects of the design (particularly heating, air conditioning, water saving devices, shading louvres etc), avoid technical jargon.

Management – we have a thorough environmental policy, communicated to all our staff, supply chain and their individual operatives on each site, to ensure that all company guidelines are followed to the letter. Our Environmental Champion is responsible for the management and implementation of the policy on site.

Monitoring – we manage our construction projects with the aim of continuous improvement which requires accurate monitoring of environmental impacts throughout the supply chain and identify mechanisms for reducing them.

We minimise waste

The need to reduce waste at all stages of construction is our central focus.

Over 90% of non-energy minerals extracted in Great Britain are used to supply the construction industry. Yet every year 70 million tonnes of construction and demolition materials and soil end up as waste - and 13 million tons of these comprise materials delivered to sites which are then thrown away unused.

Waste minimisation is a key element of lean construction. Lean Construction means not only reducing waste of materials, but also water.

The sustainable use of water in construction means minimising water wastage within buildings and within the site and preventing water sources from becoming polluted.

Energy use is also minimised: construction workers on site are made aware of the need for energy efficiency so that machinery, lighting, heating and hot water are not over-used. Automatic controls can also be installed for lighting and heating.

We prevent pollution

Every construction job can cause pollution - yet most pollution incidents are avoidable. The major sources of pollution from the construction process are:

- Waste materials
- Emissions from vehicles
- Noise
- Release of contaminants into the atmosphere, ground and water

The construction (design and management) regulations (CDM) require that the contractor is required to produce method statements detailing how the risks of pollution during a project, both during construction and in use will be safely managed.

The CDM process also covers environmental risks which also pose a risk to human health and safety. The principle is also applied to other environmental risks, such as pollution.

Most pollution incidents are therefore avoided. Our careful planning, a sensible site management, and caring how wastes are removed from the site substantially reduces the risk and in this way, building operations can be part of a sustainable approach to development.

We find that most measures to prevent pollution cost very little, especially if incorporated during the planning of a development and in fact pollution prevention and waste minimisation can offer substantial economic benefits:

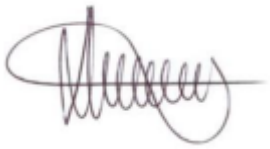
- Reduced need for expensive raw materials
- Fewer site accidents
- Reduced risk of prosecution for environmental offences

Our commitment to communication

At CA Group we feel that communication after the project is completed is also vital, and often overlooked. A client may be dissatisfied with certain aspects of the building; but unless this information is transmitted back to the design team, the same mistakes may unknowingly be made on future projects.

The Environmental Champion can encourage invaluable communication to take place between all parties. By 'closing the loop' between completion of one project and the start of another, continual improvement can be achieved.

THIS POLICY WILL BE REVIEWED ON AN ANNUAL BASIS



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