



**EPOA**  
Essex Planning  
Officers Association



# ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

## HEALTHY PLACES GUIDANCE





Activity for all



Walkable communities



Connected walking and cycling routes



Multifunctional open spaces



Co-location of community facilities



High quality streets and spaces



Appropriate infrastructure



Active buildings



Management, maintenance, monitoring and evaluation



Activity promotion and local champions

# KEY FACTS

■ A sustainable health and care system works within the available environmental and social resources protecting and improving health now and for future generations. This means working to reduce carbon emissions, minimising waste & pollution, making the best use of scarce resources, building resilience to a changing climate and nurturing community strengths and assets<sup>62</sup>. ■■

*Public Health England and NHS England, 2014*

- This statement is equally important when addressing the healthy places agenda.
- 3 goals for health, social care and public health derived from the joint Public Health England and NHS England Sustainable, Resilient, Healthy People and Places strategy<sup>62</sup>;
  - Valuing and enhancing natural resources whilst reducing harmful pollution and carbon emissions.
  - Supporting the development of communities that can respond and be resilient to climate change.
  - Every opportunity positively contributes to healthy lives, healthier communities and healthier environments.
- A key area of focus should be about enabling people and communities to be able to support themselves and maintain their independence.



## How to encourage and support environmental sustainability<sup>63,64</sup>;

- During construction phase, consideration should be given to the types of emissions from the construction vehicles used, the frequency of journeys and the timing of those journeys. This contributes to supporting the public health outcomes of improving air quality and road safety. During operational phase, private car use on the development should be reduced as much as possible and opportunities for active travel prioritised over motorised transport as this could help to set a precedence for future travel on the site. This can support the public health outcomes of increasing in physical activity.
- From the start of any proposal considering the impact of air quality on health through all stages of the development is fundamental.
- Addressing fuel poverty can be through good housing design. By ensuring that homes are well insulated and incorporate sustainable, renewable energy options, fuel costs could be kept lower. Reducing carbon emissions should also be part of this. This could support the public health outcomes of reducing fuel poverty.
- Homes should be well-ventilated to ensure that issues such as damp do not occur which can contribute to exacerbating some respiratory conditions in both children and adults. This could support the public health outcomes of reducing fuel poverty, reducing respiratory mortality and potentially excess winter deaths.
- Making sure that homes and communities can respond to climate and weather extremes is important. Homes need to be able to remain cool in the summer to avoid people overheating. Community spaces should have adequate shade as an example via tree canopies.



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- Flooding risk should be mitigated against with information in the SUDS design guide<sup>65</sup>. This supports Public Health protection.
- The development should consider how to integrate new communities with existing communities through connectivity to reduce the risk of severance and isolation. This could support public health outcomes of reducing social isolation.

- Integrating and future-proofing technology and digital solutions should be part of the development including provision of ancillary infrastructure that supports sustainable travel such as electric vehicle charging points.



#### References

- 62 Public Health England and NHS England (2014) Sustainable, Resilient, Healthy People and Places . A sustainable development strategy for NHS, Public Health and Social Care system.
- 63 Cabinet Office and Department for International Development (2017) Implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (May 2018 up-date)
- 64 Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (2018) A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment
- 65 Essex County Council (2016) Sustainable Drainage Systems design guide.