



Sustainability and Community Buildings

Introduction

This factsheet on sustainability has been produced by Community Places to assist community and voluntary groups who want to reduce the environmental impact of building construction and operation. There are many ways this can be done. Examples include:

Heating

Making the most efficient use of heating systems is fundamental to sustainable development. Ways of achieving this include:

- Choosing efficient heating systems.
- Controlling heating systems with zoning, timers, and local thermostatic radiator valves.
- Selecting energy efficient appliances and lighting.
- Heavily insulating walls, windows, roofs and floors.

Water

The Water Service is beginning work on installing water meters in all non-domestic buildings. Measures you could consider to conserve water include:

- Installing efficient taps, WCs, showers and appliances.

Renewable Energy

Consider using renewable energy such as solar water heating systems or photovoltaic roof tiles - separate grants may be available to help with the cost. For information on grants available, visit www.actionrenewables.org.

Design

An architect can address issues of sustainability in the design of a building. Possible measures include:

- Optimising the use of space with a compact design.
- Using the orientation of any new extensions or windows to maximise natural heating through capturing sunlight.
- Providing for flexible use of internal spaces to avoid waste during future alterations.
- Provision for recycling with space to sort and store different materials and composting space outside.

Materials

You can also address sustainability through your choice of materials:

- Use durable long-lasting materials.
- Consider use of local materials and local contractors.
- Use materials that can be re-used or recycled in the future if the building is dismantled.
- Select materials with a low level of energy in manufacture and transport.
- Use renewable materials as alternatives to non-renewables where possible.
- Avoid use of solvent-based materials.
- Avoid ozone depleting chemicals in equipment (CFCs and HCFCs).

Contact Details

Community Places
2 Downshire Place
BELFAST
BT2 7JQ

Telephone - 028 9023 9444

Fax - 028 9023 1411

Email - info@communityplaces.info