

National Trust Energy Policy 2007

[As approved by Board of Trustees, January 2007]

Rapid climate change, and associated sea level rise, will have a huge impact on the UK's natural and historic environment, economy and society; as will changes in energy generation and use. The National Trust believes that there is an urgent imperative to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to meet, if not exceed, the UK government's target of cutting carbon dioxide emissions by 60% by 2050. We advocate a planned approach, guided by the following principles, which we will promote to government, civil society and business:

- much greater emphasis on reducing overall energy demand, through minimising energy use, greater energy efficiency and the development and use of low embodied energy materials;
- decentralisation and localisation of energy supply – to minimise wastage and environmental degradation from energy generation and transmission, and to reduce the need for intrusive large-scale, centralised infrastructure;
- a major increase in renewable energy generation for heat and power [solar, hydro, wind, tidal, wave, ground heat recovery, bio-energy] appropriate to the site, and a significant expansion in microgeneration;
- develop and use sustainable alternative fuels for transport and power [e.g. hydrogen fuel cells, bio-diesel and bioethanol]; and
- requiring that the location and design of all energy generation and distribution schemes takes account of the full range of environmental considerations, including the protection of valued landscapes, biodiversity, the historic environment, and peoples' well-being.

We will apply these principles to our own activities. Climate change and rising sea levels are threatening hundreds of our properties, and some will also be affected by new energy generation. We have adopted a strategy which aims to reduce significantly the environmental footprint of our operations and our estate. The Trust aims to be an exemplar of responsible land, building and resource management in respect of energy, including by reducing emissions faster and further than Government targets.

The Trust will reduce our dependency on fossil fuels and the National Grid to improve our energy security, reduce our exposure to financial risk from rising energy costs, and reduce our contribution to climate change and other forms of pollution. To achieve this we will:

- review the management of our land and buildings so as to minimise energy use and deliver further benefit to the nation through their potential for renewable energy and carbon storage where this is compatible with maintaining their conservation and access values;
- review our procurement policy to favour low embodied energy materials wherever possible;
- review our use of fossil fuels to favour alternative fuels wherever possible; and
- require that any energy-related development or activity that would affect our properties be compatible with our statutory duty under the National Trust Acts to promote the conservation of places of historic interest and natural beauty, and public access to them.

In conserving energy, in generating appropriate clean and renewable energy, and in storing carbon, the Trust is acting in support of its core purpose. This will help reduce the damage to our properties from further climate change and also help us engage with our supporters and local communities, using our properties to demonstrate positive solutions and inspiring interest and public action on climate change and energy issues.