



PASSIVHAUS STANDARDS FOR NEW HOUSING



The UK Passive House Organisation



DEAR ALL,

As Green Party members we have the chance to campaign in our local areas for environmentally, socially and economically positive solutions to our country's problems. We can get our voices heard and change how things work at local levels.

We can propose common sense solutions and pressure councils to take them on, working with other parties to get intelligent policy through council chambers.

I have travelled all around the country and met many of you, and know that you understand tackling our poor quality of housing stock is a high priority, cutting fuel poverty, creating jobs and business opportunities, and cutting carbon emissions. Our party is full of amazing campaigners and I look forward to seeing you get started on this campaign from St. Ives to Sunderland.

I want to congratulate Andrew on all of his work towards a greener society so far, and his great work on greener energy and housing. If you have any questions about Passivhaus standards for new housing - he is a great source of information.

Regards,



Natalie Bennett
Green Party Leader



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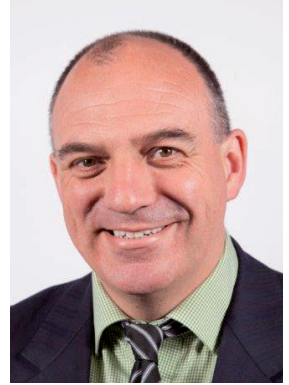
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WELCOME FROM ANDREW COOPER

WELCOME

to the first Green Party Flat Pack Campaign on Passivhaus Standards for new developments. It contains all you need to make a high impact locally. The aim of the campaign is to get Passivhaus standards adopted by local councils for all new developments on land that they own or as a condition of sale. Passivhaus is a highly energy efficient standard that reduces energy demand by around 90%.

We call this a 'Flat Pack' campaign because in this pack you should find all you need to get started campaigning on this issue. I will be co-ordinating the campaign for the Green Party of England & Wales.



In July 2015 the Conservative government abandoned the Zero Carbon Homes targets that were scheduled for introduction next year. This gives the Green Party the opportunity to highlight our policy to establish 'Passivhaus' as the UK building standard and seek to get councils around the country to adopt it as the specification for building on their own land.

In Kirklees, where I am a Councillor, we are actively pursuing this campaign and so far we have persuaded the council to support a Passivhaus exemplar project. They have put aside £1.1 million for this purpose and possible development land has been identified.

As you will see, there are a number of elements here for you to use. I would encourage you to build up support in your area, with activities such as a letter to your local paper and an email to supporters, before moving to the council motion, as it will be more likely to pass.

Please do get this local campaign off the ground as soon as possible and let me know how you are getting on. I'm just on the other end of the phone or email to provide advice to local Green Parties on this exciting campaign. Let's do what Greens do best by being ahead of the game on cutting edge policies and showing a Green alternative is the best option.

Yours sincerely,

Councillor Andrew Cooper

Kirklees Councillor & Green Party Energy Spokesperson

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

WHAT IS THE PASSIVHAUS STANDARD?

A Passivhaus, or passive house building in English, is designed for ultra-low energy consumption combined with consistently good internal air quality. This is achieved with super-insulation, thermal bridge free design, heat recovery ventilation (MVHR) and highly controlled air infiltration rates. Typically, energy demand in properties built to the Passivhaus standards are 90% less than in homes built to current building regulation standards. This can mean energy bills of less than £100/year for the average household.

DO PASSIVHAUS STANDARDS MEAN MORE EXPENSIVE BUILDINGS?

They don't have to. There are builders who are familiar with Passivhaus standards who build developments at no additional cost. Often builders who are unfamiliar with Passivhaus will submit high tenders based on a lack of knowledge. There are also new techniques to build Passivhaus buildings in modular form with key components built off site in factories. This also significantly helps reduce costs. The best way to reduce costs is to establish a policy which gives industry certainty.

DO PASSIVHAUS PROPERTIES HAVE SOLAR PANELS OR USE RENEWABLE ENERGY?

No, they don't have to. The principle of Passivhaus is to reduce energy demand. It would make sense however to incorporate solar photovoltaics or solar thermal in the design to ensure as much of the electrical and hot water demands are met from renewable sources.

WON'T A PASSIVHAUS LOOK STRANGE AND OUT OF PLACE IN OUR NEIGHBOURHOOD?

There are lots of different designs for properties built to the Passivhaus Standard and they don't have to look much different from a standard property. It is the insulation, air tightness and controlled mechanical ventilation that makes the real difference. They don't have to look like a state of the art 'Eco House' (even though they are!).

AS THE PROPERTY IS 'AIRTIGHT' WON'T IT BE STUFFY AND UNCOMFORTABLE TO LIVE IN?

All 'Passivhaus' properties have mechanical ventilation with heat recovery that means the homes are never short of fresh air. You can open the windows in a Passivhaus just like in a 'normal' home if you need to.

WHY NOT JUST BUILD TO THE 'ZERO CARBON HOMES' STANDARD RATHER THAN TO PASSIVHAUS STANDARDS?

Passivhaus is a 'quality assured' approach which ensures buildings perform as expected. Zero Carbon Homes is not and studies have shown they use far more energy than predicted.

STRATEGY

It is important to consider your strategy when executing this flat pack campaign, including the order in which you go about the numerous activities listed in this pack.

The ultimate aim of the campaign is to pass the motion at your local council, but before you get there it is crucial that you build up support for Passivhaus in your area. There are a number of ways to do this:

- Emailing your supporters and members; asking them to contact their councillors from other parties. The more people that contact councillors telling them to support the Motion, the more pressure the councillors are going to be under to do just that.
- Get a letter published in your local paper.
- Put out a press release to local journalists.
- You may be able to think of other ways – let us know if you come up with a great creative action!

For more advice on Campaign Strategy visit the Campaigns Hub on the Members' website.

MOTION TO COUNCIL

Green Party Motion to _____ Council

This Council notes:

- The government cancelling the introduction of Zero Carbon Home Standards in 2016
- The negative impact this will have on householders at risk of fuel poverty in new housing
- The missed opportunity to reduce carbon emissions in new developments
- The loss of income to the local economy as a result of these lower energy efficiency standards, as householders' income is spent paying energy bills rather than in local shops and on local services

This Council believes:

- That under the principle of 'localism' councils can determine their own standards on land that they own if those standards comply with UK Building Regulations
- That the internationally recognised 'Passivhaus Standard' offers an alternative to the UK's diminished energy efficiency ambitions for new-build housing
- That the Passivhaus standard complies with UK Building Regulations and can deliver heating bills of less than £100/year for the average three bedroom terrace

This Council agrees:

- To specify Passivhaus Standards on all buildings on Council-owned land or as a condition of sale on any council land

SUBMITTING YOUR MOTION

Your local circumstances will determine how best to approach this campaign. This is some advice to take into account when considering tactically how to get a motion to your local council, depending on the status of your local party.

NO GREEN PARTY COUNCILLORS

If you have no Green Party councillors then you could write to the Leader of the Council or the elected mayor requesting that they present the motion for consideration to the council with the required proposer/seconded. This could be an open letter to the council submitted with your press release. Your target ward candidate could be the front person for this campaign. You could also highlight the campaign by attending the full council meeting and asking a question such as:

“Will the council back the Green Party’s campaign to specify Passivhaus Standards for all new buildings on council-owned land or as a condition of sale if council land is disposed of?”

GREEN PARTY COUNCILLOR GROUP

If you are lucky enough to have Green Party councillors on your council then they can propose and second (if you have more than one Green councillor) the motion.

GREEN PARTY COUNCILLORS WORKING WITH OTHER POLITICAL PARTIES (AND INDEPENDENT CILLRS)

Some Green Councillors may have influence either through good relations with other parties or because they have the balance of power or are part of a shared administration. In these circumstances it may be an option to let another party’s councillor second the motion to build a majority to deliver the policy.

LONE GREEN PARTY COUNCILLOR

If you only have one Green Party councillor then they could write to other councillors seeking a seconder. If you receive a seconder that is a positive, but if you do not receive a seconder that can also be a positive as it demonstrates the need for more Green councillors to introduce progressive policies to the council.

NEGOTIATION TACTICS

The aim of this campaign is to establish a policy whereby the Passivhaus standard is specified for all new-build developments on council-owned land or as a condition of sale if the council is disposing of its land for development.

This may be a tough call for some councils so you may want to consider a number of fallback options if you are negotiating with the administration of your local council.

BUILDING A MAJORITY/CROSS PARTY CONSENSUS

Getting the motion passed while retaining ownership of the campaign is the aim. You will know your own council best and should be able to determine what is possible given your local circumstances. If all that is possible is to raise this as an issue that demonstrates that the Green Party is ahead of other political parties on energy efficiency standards in new housing, this also has value.

TIMESCALES

The motion implies that the introduction of the standard is immediate but you may want to suggest a two or three year 'run-in period' to allow developers to become familiar with the new standard.

EXEMPLAR PROJECTS

You may want to suggest to the administration that they could invest in some exemplar Passivhaus projects to establish local examples that will inform the policy. Funding is of course an issue. If the council is already supporting the construction of new social housing then you could suggest Passivhaus is specified. If the council still has a Housing Revenue Account for its own council housing then this could be a useful source of funding.

'HOUSING ONLY' OPTION

If you are having difficulty getting agreement on a Passivhaus Standard for all buildings then you might want a backstop position of a policy for all housing or even all social housing on the basis that it will help reduce the likelihood of fuel poverty.

A FEASIBILITY STUDY

This is often thought of as the traditional 'kick it into the long grass' option but agreeing to a feasibility study may have to be part of any compromise agreement. The important thing is to set the parameters so as to get a balanced view. Asking for the Passivhaus Trust to be involved in any feasibility study would be key.

DRAFT PRESS RELEASE

Greens call for 'Passivhaus' Revolt by _____ Council

The Green Party has called on councils around the UK to specify 'Passivhaus' design standards on council-owned land and as a condition of sale on any council land that is sold, after the government scrapped plans to introduce Zero Carbon Homes in 2016.

In July 2015 George Osborne withdrew a commitment to improve the energy efficiency standards of new homes when he announced the cancellation of a scheduled improvement in building regulations. The move has received widespread condemnation from over 200 businesses, who have asked the Chancellor to reverse the decision.

Green Party Councillor/ Spokesperson _____ condemned the scrapping of these higher energy efficiency standards by the Conservative Government.

He/she/they said:

“This backwards step by the government will entrench higher fuel bills for people living in newly built homes. For people on low incomes this will mean they are more likely to suffer fuel poverty and be faced with the difficult choice of whether to heat their homes or eat.

“The Chancellor is ignoring the reality of climate change by locking us into building standards that will force people to use high levels of energy for many years to come.

“Nearly 10 years of work has been carried out by building professionals preparing for the new Zero Carbon Homes standards. The Government has simply wasted the skill and expertise that has been established by the industry in preparation for what was mistakenly believed to be a firm government commitment.

“This is the Local Authority’s own land and there is no reason why the council cannot decide to adopt more sustainable standards than the unambitious ones specified by the government. The Conservatives say they believe in localism, so we would not expect them to stand in the way of locally determined targets like Passivhaus.”

The Green Party has called for a cross-party campaign by local councils to specify 'Passivhaus' standards on all new homes and buildings constructed on council land or as a condition of sale on council land sold for development.

Passivhaus is an internationally recognised standard that typically means that an average household can have heating bills of less than £100 per year due to the highly efficient thermal performance. As Passivhaus is an international standard it cannot be interfered with by national governments while still being in full compliance with UK Building Regulations.

ENDS.

Contact _____

DRAFT LETTER TO EDITOR

Letters to the Editor are a widely read section of local papers and a good way to reach a wide audience. This is a draft. Please do make it relevant to your local area.

Dear Sir / Madam,

In July 2015 George Osborne announced that he would be withdrawing a commitment to improve the energy efficiency standards of new homes by cancelling a scheduled improvement in building regulations. This received widespread condemnation from over 200 businesses who have asked the Chancellor to reverse the decision.

We need a cross party campaign from councillors in _____ Council to specify 'Passivhaus' standards on all new homes and buildings constructed on council land or as a condition of sale on council land sold for development.

Passivhaus is an internationally recognised standard that typically means an average household can have heating bills of less than £100/year due to the highly efficient thermal performance. As Passivhaus is an international standard it cannot be interfered with by national governments while still being in full compliance with UK Building Regulations.

Yours sincerely,

EMAIL TO SUPPORTERS

A great way to build up support for your campaign is an email to supporters.

Not only does this help build support for the campaign, but it also helps keep momentum for your local party working towards elections.

Dear [Name],

In July George Osborne announced that he would be withdrawing a commitment to improve the energy efficiency standards of new homes by cancelling a scheduled improvement in building regulations. This received widespread condemnation from over 200 businesses who asked the Chancellor to reverse the decision.

_____ Green Party will be campaigning to get _____ Council to specify 'Passivhaus' standards on all new homes and buildings constructed on council land or as a condition of sale on council land sold for development.

Passivhaus is an internationally recognised standard that typically means that an average household can have heating bills of less than £100/year due to the highly efficient thermal performance.

Will you help our campaign to improve the quality of housing in _____?

You can email your local Councillor to ask them to support our motion. Find their email here on your Council's website.

Regards,

Make it easier for your supporters and members to email their Councillor – include a hyperlink to the council contact page.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

The Passivhaus Trust

<http://www.passivhaustrust.org.uk/>

The Passivhaus Trust database of buildings

<http://passivhausbuildings.org.uk/passivhaus.php>

Building Research Establishment

Frequently asked questions

http://www.passivhaus.org.uk/filelibrary/Passivhaus_FAQs.pdf

Green Building Store

Huddersfield based builder with case studies on Passivhaus projects

<http://www.greenbuildingstore.co.uk/page--index.html>

Study showing the difference in performance between 'Passivhaus' developments & other 'eco'properties

<https://plus.google.com/+WolfgangFeist/posts/XpZoZP6uqVL>

PASSIVHAUS EXAMPLES FROM AROUND THE UK

STEEL FARM

Whitfield, Northumberland

UK Passivhaus Awards 2015 -
Winner of Small Projects category



<http://www.passivhaustrust.org.uk/projects/detail/?cld=41#.VcyD2LJVikp>

WILKINSON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Wolverhampton

UK Passivhaus Awards 2015 -
Winner of Large Projects category



<http://www.passivhaustrust.org.uk/projects/detail/?cld=67#.VcyEerJVikp>

BURNHAM OVERY STAITHE

North Norfolk

Affordable Housing



<http://passivhausbuildings.org.uk/viewproject.php?id=379>

BUSHBURY HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Wolverhampton

School built for the same cost as a
traditional build



<http://passivhausbuildings.org.uk/viewproject.php?id=332>

CAE CLISSON

Passivhaus Social Housing in Wales



<http://passivhausbuildings.org.uk/viewproject.php?id=374>

DENBY DALE PASSIVHAUS

Huddersfield

Private build



<http://passivhausbuildings.org.uk/viewproject.php?id=232>

RACECOURSE ESTATE

Tyne & Wear

28 Social Housing Bungalows



<http://passivhausbuildings.org.uk/viewproject.php?id=35>

ST MARYS WAY

Oldham

2 x social housing



<http://passivhausbuildings.org.uk/viewproject.php?id=371>



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