



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



HOW HOUSING EUROPE MEMBERS DELIVER ON THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Investing in affordable housing is investing in sustainable development



Index

Introduction	5
Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms	6
Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages	7
Infographics “Affordable housing contributes to...”	8
Goal 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern Energy for All	10
Goal 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable	11
About us	12



Introduction

The Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development (Sustainable Development Goals, SDGs) adopted by UN Member States in September 2015 in New York set 17 ambitious goals with specific targets with the aim of reaching them until 2030. Among them some are more particularly linked to housing. Housing Europe, whose vision is of a Europe which provides access to decent and affordable housing for all in communities which are socially, economically and environmentally sustainable and where everyone is enabled to reach their full potential, support the Sustainable Development Goals. With its campaign “Housing for All” and the contribution to the UN habitat conference, we already reminded policy makers of the importance of adopting housing policies that promote sustainable development.

Housing Europe members do represent the interest of 43 000 local housing organizations (which manage 26 090 000 dwellings – that is over 11% of the total EU housing stock), share this ambition and, by providing affordable homes and building liveable communities, already contribute to the achievements of the SDG.





Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms

In order to achieve this goal, i.e. to ensure that by 2030, all men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, to build the resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situations and reduce their exposure and vulnerability to climate-related extreme events and other economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters, investing in affordable housing is crucial.

Not only do social, cooperative or public housing organisations provide accommodation below the market level (on average between 50% and 80% of the market rent) and thus contribute to maintain the purchasing power of low income families, but they also provide above average quality and energy efficient homes.

In practice:

Bilbao Social Housing Solidarity Youth Flats program is a practical, innovative and sustainable way to increase access to affordable housing for graduate students and young people, who in turn are willing and ready to contribute to community life in the neighbourhoods where they live. With this program they can access shared housing rental dwellings, at a nominal price of 50€.



Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

Housing conditions are directly and indirectly linked to health outcomes, affecting most often the less wealthy and the disadvantaged; and are therefore most often suffered by the more vulnerable population groups. According to a recent report covering the whole European Union (Eurofound, 2016), inadequate housing costs EU economies nearly €194 billion per year – in direct costs associated with healthcare and related medical and social services, and indirect costs such as lost productivity and reduced opportunities. This evidence shows that housing is an important public health issue. Safe and healthy housing should therefore be a basic requirement for any society and policies for healthy housing need to be comprehensive and need to involve a wide range of professions.

By renovating their homes, adapting them to the old age or ensuring independent and healthy living, affordable housing providers improve the well-being of their tenants.

In practice:

The objective of **HELM Housing Association** (United Kingdom) is to provide essential support services and create a comfortable living environment for those living with Dementia, by developing a world-class facility which meets the needs of those with dementia and their loved ones, and creating Belfast's first dementia friendly community.

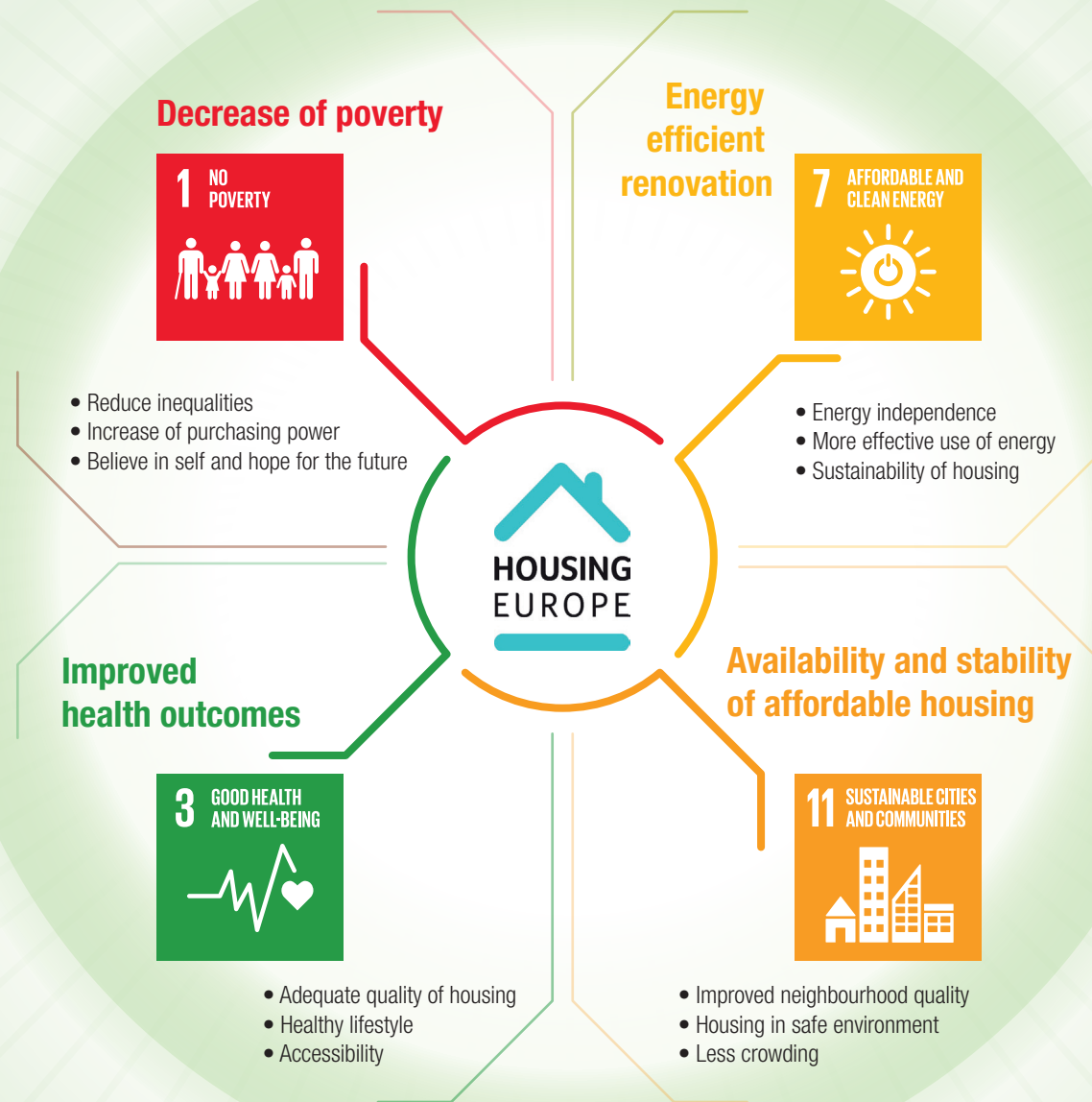
The initial objectives were to:

- Raise awareness and promote understanding of the supported housing model with Housing, Health and Social Care colleagues, the wider Shankill community and other agencies aiming to reduce stigma associated with dementia;
- Support tenants living in Hemsworth Court to build links with and feel an integral part of the local community;
- Develop and offer an educational programme for local business to promote a better understanding and support to customers living with dementia;

Early in the process it was decided that this project must be focused on delivery and outcome, ensuring that the ideals that we set out with were not lost



Affordable housing contributes to:





Goal 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern Energy for All

Buildings are responsible for 40% of energy consumption and 36% of CO₂ emissions in the EU.¹ Through new constructions and renovations, Housing Europe members not only contribute to low-carbon economy and energy independence but also to a more effective use of energy.

From 2010 to 2015 we estimate that 1.843.000 dwellings within our stock have been refurbished. Annually, our members refurbish approximately 1,2% of their stock. The homes in our members' stock offer an average energy saving of 45 kWh/m²/year.

The tenants living in the homes we manage save on average 724 € on their energy bill per year thanks to the improved energy performance. In total, we have invested more than 32,8 billion Euros in refurbishment projects. These investments have been a significant employment generator, creating a total of 506.550 full-time jobs.

In practice:

Goedkope Woning from Kortrijk in Belgium shared its project 'Venning Eco-Life', a ground-breaking construction project whose objective was to transform the most disadvantage district in Kortrijk into the most sustainable, not just focusing on energy performance, ecology and CO₂ neutrality, but also on a turning Venning into a pleasant place to live, stripping it of its social stigma. The initiative was implemented within the framework of the European Programme Eco-Life.

More info:

¹ <https://ec.europa.eu/energy/en/topics/energy-efficiency/buildings>



Goal 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

There is a globally growing demand for a liveable and caring city. There are not enough affordable homes available in most European countries to meet the increasing demand and social homes are just not enough with waiting lists growing in a number of countries. (State of Housing in the EU, 2015).

At the same time, cities are increasingly pushed to cater for those already privileged with the aim to become global cities. Therefore, housing has an essential role to play in making cities places where everyone can reach its full potential.

Affordable housing providers contribute to those needs by continuously **reducing inequalities** and social exclusion by **integrating people** in a culturally diversified society. An effective practice is the mobilisation of whole range of services to better integrate low-income and vulnerable population groups in cities using a range of instruments around sustainable and permanent housing (i.e. support to education, health and employment) to **avoid the increase of segregation** and inequalities within cities.

In practice:

In the district of Vivalla in Sweden and the surrounding neighbourhood, the rate of employment and levels of education are low compared to Örebro as a whole. The **housing company ÖBO** wanted to be involved in the efforts to reduce this problem when the time came for a major renewal project in the area.

Instead of just having construction workers from other parts of the city rebuilding Vivalla, the objective was to find a way to allow the new job opportunities that come with a major renewal project to be of benefit to the residents of Vivalla itself. The dream was that the children of local residents in the area who had previously been out of work would now be able to say with pride, "My dad, or my mum, has got a job renovating our house!" We chose to call this labour market initiative "Home builders" ("Boendebyggarna"). The Municipality of Örebro, the Adult Education College, and the Labour Market Administration, together with the local Job Centre, collaborate and communicate with job seekers who might, in various ways, be included in the team during the project. The aim is to provide trainee positions or apply other labour market measures to job seekers in the area, thereby involving them in the renewal work.





About us

Housing Europe is the European Federation of Public, Cooperative and Social Housing.

Established in 1988, it is a network of 45 national and regional federations which together gather about 43.000 public, social and cooperative housing providers in 24 countries. Altogether they manage over 26 million homes, about 11% of existing dwellings in the EU.

Social, public and co-operative housing providers have a vision of a Europe which provides access to decent and affordable housing for all in communities which are socially, economically and environmentally sustainable and where everyone is enabled to reach their full potential.

More info on SDGs on our website:

<http://www.housingeurope.eu/resource-888/implementation-of-the-sustainable-development-goals>

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