

RETIREMENT  
VILLAGES

# Building a better future.

*Sustainability Highlights  
Annual Statement  
May 2022*





# A message from Will Bax, our Chief Executive.

“The global climate and biodiversity emergency are edging ever closer to the point of no return. This places us unequivocally at the start of a necessary transition to become a sustainable global community. It’s a period where businesses must rethink the new normal and redefine what industry leadership is. We must therefore act now, act together and act quickly.

Thinking differently isn’t new to us. It’s been the foundation of everything we’ve done since 1981 when we built the UK’s first housing-with-care community in Cranleigh, Surrey.

We’ve sought to establish an approach that avoids the company contributing further to this crisis whilst maximising the creation of value to our residents, staff, supply chain, investors and to wider society. We’re proud to launch our sustainability strategy within this report which clearly sets out our objectives and targets, built around three core pillars: planet, circularity and social.

**We’re resolute in our intent to make a real and lasting positive difference. We’re determined that this is not simply seen as rhetoric. Our words are being followed by very clear actions that will allow us to realise those ambitions.**

We recognise that we’re on a journey, one which we can’t take alone. We must navigate this together with all our stakeholders to create meaningful lasting impact. We’re determined to set a market leading strategy, and it’s our intention to work with and inspire others to realise our ambitious vision for the future.”

**Will Bax**  
*Chief Executive,  
Retirement Villages Group*



*We are setting a market leading  
strategy which we constantly aim to exceed.*

**Systematic change.**

**A new standard for best practice.**

**Leveraging industry collaboration.**

**Maximising positive impact.**



# Our sustainability strategy takes a holistic approach across three core pillars.

We've set objectives and targets against each pillar to drive meaningful sustainable outcomes and systemic change across our business, residents, supply chain, investors and in turn, wider society.

This is an opportunity to return economic, environmental and social value and we are committed to drive the systematic change and collaboration that is so urgently needed.

As we achieve the targets we've set, we'll continue to stretch ourselves with new ones keeping our business, internal team and the supply chain at the forefront of leading industry action.



**Tim Seddon**  
Executive Director,  
Development

*We need to be ahead of the game and make a serious contribution to reducing climate change right now. If everyone plays their part, no matter how small, we can be secure in the knowledge that not only have we started to make a real difference in the way we live, but we are also ensuring that the next generation can look forward to a positive future.*

*This is just the beginning. Our ambition is large and growing. We embrace new technologies and learnings. We share our ideas with others. We want to, and will, make a real difference together.*



## Planet

*We'll become a regenerative business*



## Circularity

*We'll seek to eliminate waste from our communities*



## Social

*We'll Support the social and economic vitality of our local communities*





# Planet

*We'll become a  
regenerative business*

## Objective 1:

**We'll be net zero carbon  
on our operations by 2030**

## Objective 2:

**Our supply chain will be net  
zero carbon by 2030 and  
we'll support our residents  
to be by 2035**

## Objective 3:

**We'll regenerate biodiversity  
up to 20% across all new  
communities by 2025**

**Botanical Place, West Byfleet,  
will be the UK's first whole life net  
zero carbon retirement community**

**Saved 700 tonnes of carbon  
using alternative materials**

Solar panels will generate as much as  
**67,000 KW hours** of electricity per year

Apartments **50% more energy efficient**  
than homes built today

**20% EV charging points**



Internal price of  
embodied carbon set at  
**£70/tonne CO<sub>2</sub>**

For assets under management  
**100% of energy procured  
is on a green tariff**

We are on track to create 110%  
biodiversity net gain at Botanical  
Place, West Byfleet and  
21% at Boughton Heath,  
Chester.

We will build the UK's first whole life net zero carbon retirement community at Botanical Place, West Byfleet. The scheme will follow the UK Green Building Council's framework for assessing net zero carbon where all carbon is reduced as low as feasibly possible, and any remaining carbon is offset. We're committing to a **super insulated façade with triple glazing, air source heat pumps and enough photo voltaic panels** to effectively power 17 homes in the development over the course of the year.

We've applied an internal carbon tax on the embodied carbon arising through its construction, the proceeds of which will be ring fenced for a decarbonisation fund, to invest in carbon saving initiatives in our existing portfolio of 1,600 homes. The forensic approach to understanding the emissions generated

by the construction process has created a saving of over **700 tonnes of embodied carbon** through the identification of alternative low carbon materials. We're already planning to extend the number of schemes covered by the carbon tax to recent land acquisitions at Tunbridge Wells and West Malling. We'll also look to roll this approach out to other schemes like Boughton Heath, Chester.

The funds generated will prioritise the transition of our existing communities to net zero carbon. For example, to move away from fossil fuel heating. We're currently reviewing opportunities at Cedars Village, Hertfordshire, having just completed a net zero study. Alongside this we've commissioned net zero studies on both Castle Village, Hertfordshire and Lime Tree Village, Rugby.





# Circularity

*We'll design out waste from our communities*

## Objective 1:

**We'll operate within a circular economy by 2025**

## Objective 2:

**We'll construct and deconstruct within a circular economy by 2030**

## Objective 3:

**We'll support our customers to embrace circular economy principles by 2030**



At Debden Grange, Essex, we've established a pop-up eco refill service to reduce single use plastics



At Botanical Place, West Byfleet, we'll reuse 95% of materials onsite and have donated landscape structures to improve the setting of the local rail station



During the demolition phase at West Byfleet development, we removed existing street furniture such as benches, street signs and post boxes and provided them with a new lease of life; ensuring they are reused elsewhere in the town.

To further support the retention of resource value onsite during this phase our demolition contractor Squibb Group was able to achieve the aim of **recycling 95% of materials**. They achieved this by carefully demolishing Sheer House building, assessing all the different component materials and determining which could be wholly or partially preserved.

***“Since launching last year, the West Byfleet Community Gardening Group has been working hard to transform West Byfleet into a haven for wildlife.”***

**Rebecca Bradshaw**

*West Byfleet Community Gardening Group*





# Social

*Supporting the social and economic vitality of our local communities*

## Objective 1:

**We'll champion quality employment and provide local learning and development opportunities for all our communities**

## Objective 2:

**We'll partner with local business placing them at the centre of our procurement strategy by 2025**

## Objective 3:

**We'll create cohesive communities and integrate with existing ones**



Staff and residents at Park Place, Lincolnshire are knitting blankets for the pilgrim hospital neonatal unit



Art students create a magnificent mural on a section of the hoarding at Botanical Place, West Byfleet

Woking College art students created a mural displayed on site hoarding, taking inspiration from the town's rich local history in essential oils.

At Park Place, Lincolnshire, staff, residents and their families are coming together to **knit blankets for premature babies** at Pilgrim Hospital Neonatal Unit. The residents have found this helps keep social connections with their friends and neighbours.

Our new schemes will be designed and constructed to meet the highest 3-star 'Fitwel' standard, which is used to measure a user experience of living in a new building. This will enable **wellness of employees and residents to be prioritised** within the design, development, and operations.



Debden Grange, Essex, rehoused the local post office in a scheme to ensure a vital community benefit was not lost to the town





*“It’s important that we all support and champion our internal teams, the supply chain and our customers, to make a real and lasting impact. We have an ambitious strategy, which we can deliver, with hard work and realising great ideas. Our annual survey showed that 92% of our customers are in support of our sustainability goals, who if empowered, can achieve amazing things and bring that incredible number up, even more.”*

**Nick Jones**  
Commercial and Property Services Director

For more information on our sustainability strategy or community activity, please get in touch with your contact at RVG or email:

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