

### Corporate Social Responsibility

Whilst we make a profit we also accept responsibility. Whether it is valuing our staff who get results in a difficult economic climate, achieving the best balance of quality versus value to meet stakeholder expectations, acting as a good neighbour and working with communities to provide affordable housing or simply by working with suppliers and business partners to the same goals – we aim to behave with integrity.

The Crown Estate is currently developing a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) framework setting out our philosophy, principles and aims. It will embrace our corporate values of commercialism, integrity and stewardship which underpin our on-going commitment to being a good corporate citizen.

Our CSR framework will not only build on our existing values, but complement our ethical responsibilities, environmental plans, operational performance and our philosophy towards dealing fairly and openly with our customers, colleagues and the community at large.

For many years, we have encouraged and practised good corporate citizenship through a clear sense of social responsibility and environmental awareness, taking a longer term view in the management of the estate. We see our CSR framework building on these core strengths and allowing us to identify new opportunities to improve and measure our performance in the years to come.

### Environment

We work to high standards of environmental stewardship across all areas of activity and a major focus has this year been placed on initiating an Environmental Management System (EMS) based on the international standard ISO14001.

The new EMS will help us manage our environmental responsibilities through providing a framework to set targets and track our performance across the whole of our property portfolio.

We have allocated special responsibility for environmental matters to one board member and together with the main Board, will ensure that we achieve the commitments set out in our new policy.

Our policy states that we will:

- Ensure that we are compliant with all relevant legislation, other guidance and best practice principles;
- Ensure that environmental impacts are evaluated and managed when developing policy, initiating major development and change, and when reaching key investment and disinvestment decisions;
- Seek continual improvement in specific activities and operations that have key impacts on the environment;
- Adopt measures to achieve continual improvement of environmental performance and pollution prevention;
- Manage and control environmental impacts systematically by setting objectives and targets, monitoring progress, reviewing and auditing performance;
- Manage our environmental information and track and report openly our environmental performance;
- Work with our stakeholders to improve our environmental performance and minimise environmental impacts;
- Ensure that our staff and service providers have the appropriate levels of expertise, are aware of our key impacts on the environment, understand their responsibilities and are committed to applying our policies and meeting our specific objectives.

We have already begun a comprehensive assessment of the risk, significance and impact attached to these activities and the resulting targets and the progress achieved against them will be reported at the end of the next financial year.

### The community

The Crown Estate has always taken its role within the community seriously and our corporate objectives include being sensitive and responding to social needs in the areas where we operate. Although the Crown Estate Act 1961 places constraints on the financial support we can give, where appropriate, community initiatives are positively supported and encouraged in a variety of ways.

One area of our business with the community very much at its heart is our affordable housing. This year there have been around 50 new lettings of affordable housing in central London to key workers. In total we provide 1,300 affordable homes in London and Windsor, primarily for workers in local public services such as the health and fire services, transport and schools. We charge rents below market rates that enable their staff to continue to work and live in central London and play their part in ensuring the smooth running of essential services within the capital.

We recognise that many of the assets we manage are part of our national heritage, and few more so than the seabed and much of the of the coastline around the UK. We have actively supported a number of initiatives including coastal fora and visitor centres, which help look after the environment and make it more accessible, and better understood, by the community at large. Our funding for the Marine Conservation Society's Clean Seas Campaign is now in its 4th year and continues to involve volunteers in their annual Beachwatch weekend. Our own Marine Stewardship Programme (which has now incorporated our Scottish Coastal Community Awards Scheme) continues to be successful in giving recognition and financial support to projects that will enhance the coastal environment, provision for local communities and public enjoyment of and involvement in the coast.

Where possible we actively engage the local community in our activities. This year, for example, local school children were invited to help with the planning and development of a new adventure playground and conservation area on our Glenlivet Estate in Scotland. In addition, around 1,400 children were also involved in an open day we held in Windsor Great Park, where they were shown best environmental practice and rural activities in action in this rare habitat that features a deer park, ancient woodlands, coverts and an extraordinary diversity of wildlife.

Of course, our customers too form an integral part of the communities in which we operate and we aim to enhance ease of communication between ourselves, our managing agents and customers with the provision of facilities such as websites and accommodation for residents' associations. We also carry out surveys, meetings and visits to allow us to listen and respond to our customers' needs. An example of our approach in action involved the provision of enhanced security on our housing estates in response to requests from local resident committees.

#### Our employees

In April, 2003 the organisation was formally accredited as an Investor in People – a national quality standard which sets the level of good practice for improving an organisation's performance through its people. This recognised our increased focus on our training needs, on employees involvement in the business and on our communications throughout the organisation.

Specifically, we augmented the services that we can offer to our employees, including the provision of CareFirst, an independent counselling and advisory service, for employees to consult privately for any work related or personal problems. This has proved to be highly effective and supportive. We also introduced the initial stages of a new health management strategy and health surveillance management programme. One of the first outputs from this is the provision of a physiotherapy service for the workforce at Windsor Great Park.

The health and safety of our employees is of the utmost importance. This is reflected in the wide variety of training undertaken in the past year, including several health and safety briefings for all Heads of Departments and other senior managers; personal safety training for employees at our Housing offices; and at Windsor Great Park, training in manual handling, use of pesticides, operating chainsaws and prevention of hand/arm vibration syndrome.

A number of our London-based employees took part in the 'Time to Read' initiative, where they were 'paired' with a school in the City of Westminster and given time to support local school children in their learning.

We will continue to build on our achievements with a number of initiatives already in development. Such initiatives include a major project to harmonise terms and conditions across the organisation; the formal introduction of employee forums to pursue our objective of improved inclusivity; and the development of a strategy on work/life balance to supplement existing arrangements such as part-time working and flexible hours, for example with opportunities for remote working.

#### Next steps

Our work in the coming year will be to identify key performance targets and benchmarks and from next year we will report annually on our performance and activities.