

West Midlands Zero Carbon Homes Charter

The West Midlands Zero Carbon Homes Charter frames WMCA and its partners' commitment and long-term objectives to deliver zero carbon homes in the region. It is aimed at developers, housebuilders and other stakeholders involved in delivering housing within the region.

In this Charter, we set out our aspirations for a more sustainable future for the West Midlands. By embracing these principles, we can build a region which drives zero carbon development and innovation, future proofs our economy and enables our communities to prosper for years to come.



West Midlands
Combined Authority

1 Zero Carbon Developments

Principle 1

Zero Carbon Regional Ambition

All developments in the West Midlands region are net zero carbon, contributing to sustainable place-making. Developers work with partners to deliver high-quality, zero-carbon homes that celebrate the region's unique character.

Principle 2

Sustainable Growth

Development proposals maximise green space provision, prioritise sustainable density and connectivity, and focus on transit-oriented development with a shift to active travel and low-carbon modes of transport. New developments build resilient new communities whilst supporting existing ones.

2 Zero Carbon Homes

Principle 3

Fabric-First and Passive Design

New homes require little to no heating through the use of passive design principles, delivering socio-economic benefits to home occupiers. Developers adopt a fabric-first approach and optimise orientation to achieve low space heating demand, and use heat recovery methods to reduce hot water demand.

Principle 4

Decarbonised Heat and Power

Electric-led systems are complemented with investments in renewable energy generation and battery storage, to create and support new smart, dynamic energy networks. Through the use of low-carbon technologies, a supply of low-carbon energy is provided at a competitive price, ensuring local energy resilience.

Principle 5

Embodied Carbon

Developers work to reduce whole-life embodied carbon and minimise waste, through the use of advanced manufacturing construction technologies and low-carbon construction materials. Design proposals include whole-life embodied carbon measurements to inform decision-making throughout project lifecycle.



3 Homes Fit for the Future

Principle 6 Climate Responsive

New homes are climate resilient, ensuring adaptability to climate change's adverse impacts. Environmental modelling is used to optimise design and layout, maximising thermal comfort, health and well-being.

Principle 7 Life Cycle Design

Development proposals are centred around holistic business cases, adhering to cradle to grave and Circular Economy principles. Reuse and disassembly are prioritised with a 'building in layers' approach. Homes are multi-functional, designed for flexible use, residents' changing needs and lifelong occupation.

4 Building Local Expertise

Principle 8 Supporting Supply Chains

WMCA and its partners support regional supply chains in building their capacity to deliver zero carbon homes through procurement, early engagement, investment in training and upskilling, and the use of innovations and new technologies.

Principle 9 Collaboration and Knowledge-Sharing

Knowledge schemes, industry forums and learning feedback loops are set up to encourage knowledge-sharing and improve future delivery. Financial resources are pooled to support delivery of innovative schemes across the region.



5 Enabling Communities

Principle 10 Community Engagement and Stewardship

Communities are meaningfully engaged throughout a project lifecycle. Community ownership is encouraged through co-design and community-led approaches, maximising social value. They have a stake in decentralised energy systems, reaping their wider benefits and gain a better understanding of using new technologies.



6 Future-Proofing Economic Sectors

Principle 11 Low Carbon Policy and Finance

An enabling policy landscape contributes to longer-term capacity-building of the West Midlands' economic sectors, supporting reskilling, new jobs and a transition to a low-carbon, competitive economy. The region works with the financial sector to support a green new deal for the West Midlands.

Principle 12 Innovation-Led

New housing developments support low carbon innovation hubs and demonstrator projects to showcase opportunities for local businesses. Innovative financing mechanisms and delivery processes further maximise innovation potential, providing an opportunity to build an innovation-led, resilient regional economy.

