

Abstract

Title: Strategic Planning for Sustainable Refurbishment of Local Authority Housing

Sub-Title: The examination into the development of a strategic plan and best practice guidelines for the sustainable refurbishment and upgrade of the existing social housing stock

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Purpose: The purpose of the dissertation will be to review literature concerned with the issues relating to the development of a strategic plan incorporating best practice guidelines for the sustainable refurbishment including energy efficient measures of the social housing stock. The aim stems from Ireland obligation to address climate change and reduce energy consumption as set out by the Kyoto protocol and most recently the Copenhagen Accord. It was intended to gain an insight into sustainable refurbishment in relation to the procedures and policies of local authorities.

Methodology: A thorough and detailed literature review was concluded so to examine and understand the issues relating to the concept of sustainable refurbishment and the integration into the management of the social housing stock. Qualitative analysis will be the method adopted in the presentation of the findings. Data was collected by means of semi-structured interviews at separate locations convenient each participant. The participants were senior civil servants employed by local authorities having direct involvement with the refurbishment and upgrade of social housing.

Findings: Sustainability was found to be applied in broad terms within local authorities with the main emphasis on the introduction and implementation of energy efficient measures. No procedures or policies on sustainability relating specifically to the refurbishment process are in operation. Funding was also highlighted as a major factor affecting the management of all aspects of maintaining and improving the housing stock. Concerns were raised with the shortage and inconsistent manner funding was being made available and hindered the development of a structured long term plan to manage the housing stock. The need for additional information and the updating of the building regulations and technical guidance documents to reflect the increase of refurbishment and upgrade works along with the application of sustainable methods and solutions were required. The research identified a requirement for a strategic plan and best practice guidelines to deal specifically with the sustainable refurbishment and upgrade of energy efficient methods in the asset management of the social housing stock.