



# Network

**News**

**April 2009**

## **AECB Local Groups**

The local group network of the AECB is growing from strength to strength. Please can all organisers let us know of events and meetings planned, as well as local news so that we can include them in the newsletter. Also if any new groups are thinking of setting up, let us have a piece for the newsletter and we will include in future issues. Email items to [network@aecb.net](mailto:network@aecb.net)

## **Of Interest To AECB Members – Free Sustainability Programmes Courtesy Of The NBS Learning Channels**

Sustainability is one of the greatest challenges facing the construction industry. However keeping abreast of the latest regulation, guidance, opinion and debate is an ongoing challenge for today's professional. Sustainability Spotlight is an informative and topical learning resource covering a range of sustainable construction topics. There are programmes covering the Code for Sustainable Homes, SUDS (Sustainable Urban Drainage) and WRAP – Recycling and Waste Reduction.

Each programme, carefully chosen from the NBS Learning Channels, provides essential guidance and explores the implications for the construction sector through debate and in-depth interviews with leading industry experts.

Go to [www.theNBS.com/Spotlight](http://www.theNBS.com/Spotlight) to watch the sustainability programmes for free

## **Gale & Snowden Nominated For Architectural Oscars**

Ecological and energy efficient Architects and Mechanical Engineers Gale & Snowden, who have offices in Bideford and Exeter, have been shortlisted for a National Civic Trust Award, the equivalent in the architectural world of the Oscars for their project 'Oak Meadow' sustainable housing at South Molton, North Devon, one of their innovative low energy and ecological projects for which the practice are acknowledged as National leaders in their field.

The Civic Trust Award for Gale & Snowden Architects Ltd tops an already significant number of national and local awards for good design and environmental sustainability for the Oak Meadow project as well as other projects the practice has undertaken. The practice received a Civic Trust special prize in 2003 for Woolsey Sports and Community Hall for being the best village hall in the country.

The Civic Trust Awards have been attracted by Oak Meadow as the 35 house development has been designed to the highest environmental standards which mean that they have minimal pollution from their use and cost very little to run. The buildings are passively designed so that they do not need to be heated unless the temperature outside drops below minus three degrees centigrade. The houses have also been design to be healthy and safe places to live, avoiding toxic building materials, easily cleanable and low maintenance materials being used throughout.

Earlier this month, Gale & Snowden Architects Ltd were in the local papers in Exeter and on Spotlight SW TV for their new stunning designs for a series of infill sites in Exeter City which go one stage beyond the Oak Meadow project. These thermally massive buildings are passively designed so as to not require a heating systems at all, but rather are reliant upon the occupancy of the houses for their heat gains, making the average running costs for hot water and heating to be in the order of £150 per year.

For more information go to: [www.ecodesign.co.uk](http://www.ecodesign.co.uk)

## **AECB Member Makes Innovative Use Of Limecrete For Underground House**

Dan Stainer-Hutchins was asked by Somerset Moore to design a house on Cleeve Hill, nr. Cheltenham. Because the site is outside the urban boundary, any planning application has to comply with PPS7 rules (or Gummer's Law). This means that the architecture must be "outstanding and innovative". The scheme has resulted in a semi underground house with an arched limecrete roof, covered in turf.

As ecological architects, we proposed using the excavated limestone, on site, to form the new structure. When we investigated, no one has used limecrete for suspended floors or roofs since Roman times. Initial tests, with

lime suppliers – “Chelmix”, showed that it may be possible to come up with a blend of lime putty, aggregates and fibres, that achieves sufficient strength to do the job. Project engineers Ramboll Whitby Bird, Bath University, Chelmix and DSH architects are now engaged in a research project to develop the material into a useful product.

Limecrete is a very worthwhile material. The raw materials are locally available. Less embodied energy is used in its manufacture. Much less Co2 is generated in its production, than ordinary concrete. It can be made on site, if needs be. The end use material is less harmful to humans. A new structural material would give a wider choice of methods of construction for new buildings. It compliments the range of lime based building materials all ready available.

Contact: Dan Stainer-Hutchins, 01453 839121. or visit [www.dsharchitects.co.uk/](http://www.dsharchitects.co.uk/)

### **Simple And Inexpensive Water Saving Device From AECB Member Varyflush Ltd**

Varyflush Ltd invented and manufactures the interflush, an innovative and simple water saving device. Of the 150 litres we each use a day, 60 are used for toilet flushing. For 160 years we have pressed and let go, releasing the whole cistern full every time, a complete waste of water. Fit the interflush to the existing siphon and connect to the front handle. Operation is now: press, hold down to flush, let go to stop. Uses only what is needed, wasting none at all, saving half the flushing water on average, 30 litres per person per day, making all other flushing systems obsolete.

Also saves the siphon from extinction, the only flushing device that never leaks. Push-button toilets all have drop-valves in the cistern, which have been known to leak between 15-30 litres per person per day, which has been in US textbooks for decades. In a trial of the interflush Leeds City Council cut water usage by 25% on a ten storey office block, Merrion House.

Visit [www.interflush.co.uk](http://www.interflush.co.uk), or tel: 0845 0450276

### **On-Site Renewable Industry At Cliff Edge**

The Renewable Energy Association, representing the renewables industry, expressed astonishment and concern at the closure of Stream 2 support for PV under the Low Carbon Building Programme (LCBP). Only four days after the Government laid out plans for a low-carbon revolution, at the Solar PV launch of its new low-carbon industrial strategy, it announced that the funding stream for the most popular technology, solar power, had run out. No applications made since the 26 February are permissible and the whole stream is due to end in June.

In December last year an extra £7 million was allocated to the PV stream of the LCBP to tide it over until the programme closed. However this funding had all been allocated by the 26 February 2009. A further £12 – 15 million still remains in the LCBP budget and at the present rate of spend it is predicted that £8 million will remain unspent by the end of the programme. The Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) have said that Phase 2 will not be extended and any remaining funds will be sent back to the Treasury.

The REA recommends the immediate reallocation of remaining LCBP funds on a first come, first served basis so all microgeneration technologies can gain maximum benefit. Having brought this problem to the attention of DECC in early Feb the Association was surprised that nothing had been done to prevent the PV funding running dry. The end of the LCBP will leave many REA members left in limbo with no funding as the recession bites.

For more information go to: [www.r-e-a.net/document-library/press-releases/0903GreenNewEnergyDeal.pdf](http://www.r-e-a.net/document-library/press-releases/0903GreenNewEnergyDeal.pdf)

### **UK Housing Makeover Plan Has Forgotten Water**

UK water conservation group Waterwise are calling for the Government to include water efficiency measures in their plans to refurbish the country's homes. A quarter of the average household's energy bill comes from heating water, which adds up to around 5% of the UK's total CO2 emissions, says the organisation.

Waterwise welcomes the Government's proposals to encourage the use of renewable energy to heat water, such as solar water heaters, but says the measures should go further.

For further information: [www.waterwise.org.uk](http://www.waterwise.org.uk)

### **Big Three Agree To Align Green Building Ratings**

Representatives of the 'big three' green building rating systems signed a Memorandum of Understanding at Ecobuild conference in London yesterday agreeing to work together towards aligning the standards. The US Green Building Council, which developed and manages the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification scheme, the UK's BRE, which administers the BREEAM system, and the Green Building Council of Australia's Green Star rating tool all use slightly different methods to measure the environmental impact of buildings.

The agreement between the three organisations will set up a working group to develop common metrics to measure CO2 emissions from new homes and buildings. It will also aim to align the rating tools of each organisation and provide consistency in reporting. The organisations are not looking to merge the schemes into one, according to John Alker of the UK Green Building Council. But the alignment of the schemes should make it easier for global companies to compare the performance of their buildings in different regions.

Buildings typically account for up to 40% of a country's energy use and carbon emissions. But existing technologies such as improved insulation, energy efficient lighting and appliances can reduce energy usage and emissions substantially. The agreement is a major opportunity for the organisations to move towards common carbon metrics, says Carol Atkinson, chief executive of BRE.

### **UK Green Building Council Calls For Code For All Non-Domestic Buildings**

The UK Green Building Council (UKGBC) today launched a plan calling for a sustainability code for all non-domestic buildings both new and existing to mirror the Code for Sustainable Homes. The proposed Code for Sustainable Buildings would establish a single clear policy and regulatory framework for the built environment. Uniquely, the code would set progressively more ambitious standards over time to drive up performance.

Buildings would be regularly assessed – rather like an MOT for a car – throughout their lifecycle for carbon emissions, energy usage, waste and water performance to ensure that their performance was improving. The Code would, therefore, also be vital in driving the systematic collection of data about building performance, which is currently lacking. The plan, which has been drawn up with some of the UK's major players in construction and property, will be presented to the Government with the hope of being adopted as future building regulations and standards.

For further information: [www.ukgbc.org/site/home](http://www.ukgbc.org/site/home)

### **EU Approves 5% VAT On Home Improvements**

The UK is to be given the option to charge VAT on home maintenance and repairs at a reduced rate of 5%, after a ruling by European Union finance chiefs. The ruling paves the way for the UK government to ease the tax burden on a construction industry badly hit by the recession – allowing architects, builders and surveyors to carry out private refurbishments for a cheaper rate. Yesterday's decision by the EU Economic and Financial Affairs Council to allow member states to lower VAT on renovation and repair of private dwellings from 17.5% to 5% comes after months of campaigning by trade bodies and MPs.

A 5% VAT rate on home improvements was one of the main points of the Get Britain Building manifesto set up by a coalition of MPs and trade bodies last month. It has also been the focus of a long-running campaign led by the Federation of Master Builders (FMB). The FMB has led a long-running campaign to cut VAT on home improvements, which became a key point in the Get Britain Building coalition manifesto last month. It remains to be seen whether the government will opt to lower the VAT on home improvements, but such a move would have environmental benefits, increasing green refurbishment and helping the UK fulfil its pledge to lower carbon emissions by 80% by 2050.

Source [www.building.co.uk/story.asp?storycode=3135832&origin=bldgbreakin](http://www.building.co.uk/story.asp?storycode=3135832&origin=bldgbreakin)

### **UK Households Cut Energy Use By 35% In Energy Efficiency Challenge**

A year-long energy efficiency challenge has seen households across the UK cut energy usage by up to 35% and reduce CO2 emissions by nearly a quarter. The British Gas Green Streets programme gave eight streets in eight UK cities £30,000 to spend on energy efficiency measures such as insulation, improved boilers, smart meters and solar panels and advice about simple behaviour changes that reduce energy use.

Over the course of the year, the 64 households reduced their energy usage by an average of 25% with Green Lane in Cookridge, Leeds leading the way with a 35% cut. Some individual households even managed a 70% decrease in energy use. If all UK households followed suit, they could save an average of £200 a year on energy bills, according to the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR), which monitored and analysed the results of the programme.

The householders credited the face-to-face energy saving advice and the use of smart meters as the most useful drivers for reducing energy consumption. The households in the Green Streets programme spent an average of £3750 on insulation and other energy-saving appliances and measures, which could be recouped in around three years.

For further information: [www.ippr.org.uk/](http://www.ippr.org.uk/)

### **UK Green Building Regulations Not Under Control, Warns Report**

Despite making moves in the right direction, the UK's Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) has no direct control over green building regulations and their enforcement, warns a report from the Public Accounts Committee. While the Government's domestic energy efficiency programmes have resulted in a drop in energy use between 2004 and 2007, this trend is unlikely to continue, says the report.

The UK still lags well behind some of its European neighbours such as the Netherlands and Sweden in household energy consumption. The Government has set a target of reducing household energy consumption by 36% by 2020 compared with 2001-2005 levels, but over 80% of these savings are expected to come from building regulations and obligations on suppliers, which are out of DECC's control. The monitoring and enforcement of energy efficiency building regulations will have to be improved – but these are under the control of the Department for Communities and Local Government. The report also expressed concerns that building control professionals are not prioritising energy efficiency.

The committee also criticised the fact that consumers are presented with a “confusingly wide range of advice on energy efficiency” from the Government itself, energy suppliers and other organisations. While the committee ultimately welcomes the Government's latest proposals on household energy efficiency, it also advocates introducing home energy audits and a quality standard for installers of energy efficiency measures such as insulation. The report also recommended formulating a comprehensive programme to support DECC's desire for all households to have a smart meter by 2020, as well as instigating initiatives to encourage landlords to improve the performance of rental properties.

For further information: [www.parliament.uk/parliamentary\\_committees/committee\\_of\\_public\\_accounts.cfm](http://www.parliament.uk/parliamentary_committees/committee_of_public_accounts.cfm)

### **UK Eco-Town Not Financially Viable, Says Independent Report**

One of the eleven locations currently on the UK Government's eco-towns shortlist, Middle Quinton in Warwickshire, has been dubbed financially unviable by an independent report. The proposals for an eco-town on a former army base at Marston, near Stratford-on-Avon would not be able to provide basic infrastructure like public transport, schools and roads without a massive public subsidy, according to consultants CB Richard Ellis (CBRE).

CBRE, who carried out the appraisal on behalf of six local authorities affected by the plans, claim the shortfall would be around £373 million. A spokesperson for Communities and Local Government (CLG) responded that Middle Quinton is just one proposal for an eco-town site and is being assessed along with all the others. Housing Minister Margaret Beckett has also announced that local residents will now have more time to comment on this and other shortlisted locations.

The draft plans for the eco-towns and appraisals of their sustainability will now be open for public comment until the end of April. Residents will have another chance to respond once actual planning applications for eco-towns are submitted. A viability study on all the proposals will also be published shortly, but the CBRE report is yet another dent to the eco-towns strategy.

For further information: [www.planningportal.gov.uk/](http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/), <http://ecotownsyoursay.direct.gov.uk/>

[www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/ppsecotowns](http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/ppsecotowns)

### **UK Recovery Plan Should Make Building Energy Efficiency Top Priority**

A report from the Environmental Audit Committee has welcomed the UK Government's £535 million green stimulus plan but says it is not enough to transform the UK into a low-carbon economy. The plan should make improving the energy efficiency of existing buildings a top priority, says the committee. The extra £100 million funding for the Warm Front programme included in the plan is welcome, says the report, but is not enough to drive the scale and speed of change that is needed. The committee is urging the Treasury to provide an assessment of each aspect of the stimulus plan on the environment and carbon emissions. Much of the spending for this year had already been earmarked, adds the report, and is likely to be offset by reduced spending next year.

The plan is also contradictory, suggests the report. For example, £250 million is earmarked for low-carbon cars and the plan promises new rolling stock for the railways. But the package also contains significant investment in road building and widening and no clear plans for shifting journeys off the road and onto rail. The report also criticised the Treasury's decision not to pursue a 'car scrappage' scheme, where motorists are given an incentive to trade in older, more polluting models for fuel efficient alternatives.

The Government's plans to reform air passenger duty also come in for criticism. While the move to link the tax to the distance travelled was welcomed, the report urges the Government to reconsider introducing a per tax plane, which would encourage airlines to operate flights more efficiently. The report also urged the Government to introduce fuel duty and VAT on domestic flights, to encourage a move to alternative modes of transport such as rail, and seek to change international rules that forbid taxing of aviation fuel.

The Government should properly commit to a green investment programme, says the report, and adopt recommendations to specify a proportion of the UK's GDP that will be spent on green stimulus measures now and in the future. The Stern report argues for 0.8% of GDP – around £11 billion. The Government's spending on the creation of a low-carbon economy should also be benchmarked against those of other G20 nations.

For further information: [www.parliament.uk/eacom/](http://www.parliament.uk/eacom/)

### **UK Government Launches Climate Change And Environment Task Force**

The UK Government has today launched a new interdepartmental task force that will bring the not-for-profit sector on board to tackle climate change and environmental issues. Defra, Department of Energy and Climate Change and Cabinet Office ministers will chair the group, together with third sector representatives, and it will also include representatives from the Department for Communities and Local Government.

The group is being tasked with identifying specific actions that the Government and not-for-profit organisations can undertake on climate change, sustainability and environmental issues. For example, third sector networks and community links could be harnessed to encourage households to invest in energy efficiency measures or to help neighbourhoods or towns become low-carbon. The move has been welcomed by environmental charities and the volunteer sector.

Third-sector organisations are now being recruited by Green Alliance and NCVO, who are administering the task force activities, and organisations can also apply for membership.

For further information: [www.defra.gov.uk](http://www.defra.gov.uk)

### **UK Invests £6 Million Into Energy-Efficient Housing Research**

The UK's Technology Strategy Board has announced six research projects worth £6 million that aim to develop new energy- and water-saving materials and components. The government-funded organisation is investing £3 million, with the rest of the funds matched by industrial partners. The projects include research into high-efficiency, cost-effective windows, cheap and energy-efficient lightweight building systems and highly insulated external wall construction systems.

Huge improvements to building stock will be required to meet the Government's aims of reducing carbon emissions from new homes to zero by 2016 and from new non-domestic buildings by 2019. The Technology Strategy Board will also be opening three new funding competitions in the summer that will cover refurbishment, design tools for low-carbon buildings and monitoring building performance.

For further information: [www.innovateuk.org/](http://www.innovateuk.org/)

### **UK Government Should Tackle Inefficient Commercial Buildings**

The UK Government should be tackling inefficient non-domestic buildings as well as homes as part of its efforts to reduce emissions, says a new report from sustainable construction products firm Kingspan Group. The report, which was drafted by consultants Caleb Management Services, estimates that a modest increase to the £27 billion already being spent each year on the refurbishment of non-domestic buildings could dramatically improve overall energy efficiency.

At the moment, non-domestic building refurbishment does not typically pay much heed to improving energy efficiency – at best, existing regulations are regarded as the maximum level of attainment, rather than a starting point. But increasing this annual spend by £1.96 billion to ensure that all refurbished buildings meet level C Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating by 2022 could save organisations around £450 million a year in energy bills. This level of saving could come simply from installing tried and tested insulation measures alone, says the report. Reducing energy usage would make a significant dent in carbon emissions – by about 0.36 Mt annually. And it would also create 50,000 long-term jobs in the insulation installation sector.

The task is a big one, however. Current estimates are that 94% of domestic buildings fall below an EPC 'C' rating – and this is likely to be similar for non-domestic buildings. And non-domestic buildings current account for around 18% of the UK's total carbon emissions – so savings will have to be made if the country is going to meet its target of an 80% cut in emissions by 2050. To drive the necessary level of change in non-domestic buildings, the Government both needs to implement standards for the sector and provide financing so that organisations receive full support on upfront costs, which are paid back from energy bill savings.

The challenges are daunting. The construction industry is not geared up to delivering low-carbon refurbishment and local planners have little training or experience of the available technologies. And then there is the complex nature of organisations and premises, with many non-domestic buildings shared by multiple occupants using them for different activities. The Government should have taken action on non-domestic buildings 10-20 years ago, says the report, but there is another opportunity now, which should not be missed.

For further information: [www.kingspan.com/](http://www.kingspan.com/)

### **Wales Introduces New Rules To Improve Efficiency Of Homes**

The Welsh Assembly Government is introducing new plans aimed at improving the energy efficiency of homes in the region. The plan, which will introduce new rules for the home energy efficiency scheme (HEES), will mean more assistance for low-income homes to reduce fuel poverty by improving insulation and heating.

Fuel poverty is defined as those individuals or households who spend more than 10% of their income on heating. The Welsh Assembly Government has set a target of eradicating fuel poverty in the region by 2010. Individuals on benefits who have inefficient homes will now be eligible for an improved package of help

including solid-wall insulation or microgeneration systems. Until now, help had only been available for households on benefits with children under 16, over 60s and the disabled and chronically ill.

The plan will also provide better information and advice for the public wishing to improve the efficiency of their homes, as well as support for small businesses. The plan also commits the region to halt any public investment in high-carbon home heating. Since 2000, the Welsh Assembly Government has invested £100 million through the HEES scheme to improve the efficiency of over 100,000 households in the region.

For further information: <http://wales.gov.uk>

### **Snetterton Utilities Project – Energy Supply Opportunity**

Snetterton Heath is located on the A11 between Thetford and Attleborough, in the heart of Norfolk. It is recognised as a key employment site for Breckland Council and the County and a key element of Breckland's Rural Enterprise Valley development. It is currently planned that the present development of about 30ha of business and light industry will be more than doubled. However, further development of the site is constrained by inadequate utility infrastructure, specifically gas and electricity.

Breckland Council's Snetterton Utilities Project aims to remedy this situation and thereby enable the development of the employment zone. The aspiration is that an energy supply company will develop a solution using local sources of renewable fuels and innovative technology. This is in alignment with Breckland's Environmental Strategy 2008 – 2013 which aims to make the district carbon neutral. Snetterton Heath has excellent road and rail access and landowners keen to see a comprehensive and coordinated development take place. Planners do not foresee any significant policy issues and there are a number of possible local fuel sources, some of which might bring the added benefit of agricultural employment.

Further information on the project, including a Prospectus which promotes the opportunity to meet this demand, may be found online at [www.ruralenterprisevalley.com/snetterton](http://www.ruralenterprisevalley.com/snetterton).

### **LEED Standards For Data Centres Needed, Says IT Coalition**

A coalition of IT groups is asking the US Green Building Council (USGBC) for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification standards for data centres. Existing criteria for low-carbon building certification do not easily accommodate the substantial heating and cooling demands of data centres. However, these requirements make energy efficiency extremely desirable. So a group of IT companies have got together and developed a draft LEED for data centres with the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory (LBNL). The draft proposals are now being submitted to the USGBC for consideration before adoption.

It is possible to reduce energy consumption with compromising the performance and reliability of a data centre and some have attained high levels of LEED certification. Digital Realty Trust's Chicago facility, for example, was one of the first to earn gold level LEED certification, more recently joined by LBNL's \$65 million six-storey Molecular Foundry, which houses labs, a clean room and a data centre.

For further information: <http://hightech.lbl.gov/dc-epc.html>

### **Recession Drives Corporate Investment In Energy Efficiency**

The global recession is driving corporate adoption of energy efficiency measures in a bid to cut costs, according to a survey by the Economist Intelligence Unit. Energy efficiency will be a high or moderate priority over the next two years for nearly three-quarters (73%) of respondents. However, wider initiatives to deal with the impact of climate change are more likely to be neglected or put on hold for the moment, according to two-thirds of those polled.

The study, Countdown to Copenhagen: Climate change and the implications for policy and corporate strategy, which was sponsored by the Carbon Trust, KPMG, SAP and Shell, surveyed 538 executives around the world. More than 50% of companies have some kind of climate change strategy, although in most cases this simply equates to energy efficiency. According to one executive, climate-change action begins and ends with energy efficiency.

Although this is good news for reducing energy consumption, some of the savings will come simply from the downturn in business rather than long-term sustainable changes in behaviour. However, this is one area where more than one-half of those surveyed favour more governmental regulation to drive and maintain change on energy and environmental issues. Energy efficiency also provides new opportunities, as some companies are finding out. Around 40% of respondents say that their organisations have developed new products or customer services related to energy efficiency or reducing environmental impact. Proctor & Gamble, for example, developed a cold water detergent when the company realised that heating water accounted for a large proportion of its carbon emissions.

For further information: [www.eiu.com/sponsor/climatechange/](http://www.eiu.com/sponsor/climatechange/)

## **Events**

### **Homes For Good 2009 – 17-18<sup>th</sup> April - Exeter**

Homes for Good is well known for showcasing cutting edge sustainable construction techniques and building materials, energy efficiency measures and renewable energy technology, as well as promoting realistic lifestyle techniques that help to reduce consumption, save energy and make sustainable living easy.

Homes for Good exposes the wide range of products and services available within the south west and beyond, helping to create local connections between consumer and supplier.

Everyone can learn something at Homes for Good. The show will be of interest to a wide audience: householders and homeowners, gardeners, self-builders, general builders, garden designers, architects, landscape architects, all areas within the construction industry, wildlife enthusiasts, councillors, construction and design students...everyone who wishes to see and learn about creating a healthy and sustainable built environment.

Tickets £5 Concessions £2 Under 16 go FREE

Go to: [www.homesforgood.info](http://www.homesforgood.info)

### **Monitoring & Build System Performance - 29th April**

Held at the Windows, 13 Windsor St Islington, London N18QG, and sponsored by Energy Saving Trust.

Come and hear more at our event: Monitoring, build systems and on-site techniques for low carbon building on 29th April 13.30 – 17.30. This event will compare thermal performance across a range of build systems and summarise results from recent post construction and post occupancy monitoring.

Speakers include Professor Fionn Stevenson from Oxford Brookes University, Malcolm Bell from Leeds Metropolitan University, Adrian Buffery from GreenOak and Andrew Mitchell from NBT Consult.

Presentations will include practical experience and lessons about the delivery and monitoring of low carbon homes, including recent CLG Code-compliant case studies, BioRegional Quintain's One Brighton scheme, and leading Housing Association projects.

There will be a mini-exhibition of companies involved in the evolving domestic monitoring market and there will be plenty of time to discuss their products and services.

Free to GHA members, £150+VAT for non-members.

Please book your place by emailing Lilja or Laura: [info@goodhomes.org.uk](mailto:info@goodhomes.org.uk) or visit [www.goodhomes.org.uk/](http://www.goodhomes.org.uk/)

### **Passivhaus Tour – Belgium, 13-15 May 2009**

A two-day tour of low energy buildings in Belgium is being arranged for 13 – 15 May 2009. The tour, which includes visits to buildings in Gent, Nivelles and Brussels, uses low carbon Eurostar and coach travel and includes two overnight stays at the Novotel Hotel in Gent.

Participants will have the chance to view homes, offices and schools built to PH standards and to meet with the designers. Buildings include the Gent Natural Visitor Centre / Office (a permanent exhibition of the PassivHaus concept with a visible ventilation system), Lab 15 (a timber frame company building to PH standards in Gent), a small timber frame certified PH house and a newly finished brick built house. On the second day, trips are arranged to two schools – one PH certified and one nearly completed construction to PH standards.

The tour departs from St Pancras at 14.34 on Wednesday 13 May and returns at 19.56 on Friday 15 May. The price of £595 including VAT includes return travel from London St Pancras, all travel while in Belgium, accommodation, breakfast and evening meal.

For more information please contact: Karen Purvis on 01993 831859 or email: [karen@bluezulumarketing.co.uk](mailto:karen@bluezulumarketing.co.uk)

### **AECB Annual Conference – Oxford Brookes University, 11-12 June 2009**

Registration is now open for the 2009 AECB Conference. This year's event 'Building for a Sustainable Future: Policy, Research and Design' will take place at Oxford Brookes University, 11-12 June 2009.

The programme, which is organised in association with the Oxford Institute for Sustainable Development at Oxford Brookes, features a keynote presentation by Wolfgang Feist of the Passivhaus Institute, followed by the following 12 workshop sessions focussing on the main conference themes of policy, research and design.

- Review of the Code for Sustainable Homes
- An ecominimal approach to water

- Eco-Towns – theory and practice
- Case Study: Refurbishment of a Victorian townhouse to near PassivHaus level of performance
- Building performance feedback for public buildings
- Building performance feedback for UK homes
- Using new materials in refurbishments - homes and offices
- Ecomaterials – busting some myths
- Tower blocks and terraces: Low carbon retrofit exemplars
- Investigating heat pumps as a low carbon system
- Delivering PassivHaus buildings in the UK
- Airtightness – towards 2010

The following four workshops will be delivered by Wolfgang Feist and these are limited to 50 per workshop on a first come, first served basis. Each delegate may attend only one of these workshops so please register early to secure your preferred choice.

- Why high performance insulation? Can you insulate too much?
- Do we need triple glazing?
- The role of ventilation
- Why passive houses? Why heat recovery? Why operable windows? Why 15kWh/(m<sup>2</sup>a)?

Additional features include a review of selected refurbished houses from the Oxford area and beyond, a closing plenary panel session and an exhibition. Accommodation is available at the conference venue for £40 (+VAT) per night and can be booked via the online registration form.

Enquiries concerning the conference and the exhibition should be directed to [karen@bluezulumarketing.co.uk](mailto:karen@bluezulumarketing.co.uk)

### **Sustainable Innovation 09 – 26th-27th October– Farnham Castle, Farnham, Surrey.**

Conference Announcement And Call For Papers – Towards a Low Carbon Innovation Revolution

Sustainable Innovation 09 will provide a platform to discuss the future opportunities and challenges related to the design, development and commercialisation of low carbon innovation, technologies, products and services. Sustainable Innovation 09 will include invited and refereed papers from academics, consultants, entrepreneurs, investors, technology providers, designers, sustainability, environment and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) managers as well as other business functions. The event will be a unique learning experience, networking space and an opportunity to think. Delegates will come globally from large companies, entrepreneurs, as well as academia, government and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). The conference is supported by an international Advisory Board.

Sustainable Innovation 09 welcomes conceptual and research-based papers covering sustainable innovation, technology, product and service design and development. Papers focused on low carbon solutions and sustainable innovation related to the following topics are particularly welcomed:

Radical change, Market transformation, Sustainable Consumption & Production, Regional approaches, Product policy, Sustainable public procurement, New business models, Collaborations and partnerships, Sustainable technologies, Innovation processes, Supply chain management, Product-service-systems (PSS), Management systems, Organisational dimensions, Sustainable product design and development, Product-related carbon foot printing, Methodologies, Case studies

Conference papers: please email to [SI09@ucreative.ac.uk](mailto:SI09@ucreative.ac.uk), fax or post up to 500 words describing your proposed paper by 30th March 2009. The paper will then be sent to the Advisory Board for evaluation and authors will be given feedback by the end of May 2009. The highest rated papers will be invited to present at the conference. Please only submit abstracts if you have a budget to attend the conference.

For more information on Sustainable Innovation 09 please contact: Martin Charter, Director, The Centre for Sustainable Design, University for the Creative Arts, UK. Tel 01252 892772, Fax: 01252-892747, email: [mcharter@ucreative.ac.uk](mailto:mcharter@ucreative.ac.uk) or visit [www.cfsd.org.uk](http://www.cfsd.org.uk)

*If you have any news, events or courses you would like to publicise in Network then please email details to [network@aecb.net](mailto:network@aecb.net), or post to Chris Lord-Smith, y Graig, Llidiart-y-Waen, Llanidloes, SY18 6JT.*