



# Network

**AECB News**

**June 2010**

## **AECB 2010 Anniversary Conference – Now Booking**

Booking has opened for the AECB's 21st Anniversary Conference and Birthday Party, on the 1st and 2nd October. Join us at the stunning new WISE Building at the Centre for Alternative Technology, Machynlleth for the AECB 2010 Annual Conference and AGM.

You can view details of workshops confirmed to date, and find out about local accommodation to plan your trip via the conference pages at [www.aecb.net](http://www.aecb.net). Cost to members: £235 including VAT.

Retrofit and New Build will share prominence at this year's "Something Old, Something New" event, which features a wide range of talks, workshops, case studies and practical demonstrations. A sample of the sessions includes: workshops on Retrofit for the Future and Renovation Q&A; New build to Passivhaus and beyond: two very different certified Passivhaus builds, and a chance to meet the certifier. Also, sessions on breathability, affordable self-run housing development, a practical demonstration on airtightness, and presentation of CAT's Zero Carbon Britain 2030 report.

As always at the AECB, the emphasis is on built examples, practical experience, and on sharing problems and solutions, with plenty of time for networking and discussion.

For more information about the programme go to <http://www.aecb.net/conference.php> and click on 2010 Conference.

More speakers and workshops are still being added to the programme – keep an eye on Network or the AECB website for more information

- Sponsor a student place at the AECB conference

Would you like to help spread the word among the rising generation? Every year the AECB offers the chance for members to give a helping hand to encourage students to attend the AECB Conference. £100 will help support a student bursary. These bursaries were very popular last year and supporting companies will receive acknowledgement in the final programme. For full details contact [conference@aecb.net](mailto:conference@aecb.net).

- Exhibit in the AECB Anniversary Conference Exhibition Space

As with previous events, an exhibition will accompany the conference sessions. Companies wishing to exhibit or sponsor the conference should contact the conference secretariat at [conference@aecb.net](mailto:conference@aecb.net) for details of the options available.

## **Chance To Be In On The Joint AECB/Technology Strategy Board Low Energy Buildings Database Launch**

AECB has been working with the Technology Strategy Board's Retrofit for the Future (R4F) team to develop and extend the AECB/CarbonLite Buildings Performance Database. The new database will be jointly owned by AECB and the TSB, and will incorporate monitoring data from all 86 of the R4F winning social housing retrofits, plus data from a wide range of AECB member projects, both refurb and new build, domestic and non-domestic.

The Low Energy Buildings Database, as it will now be known, represents a remarkable resource, offering unprecedented insight into the performance of over 100 buildings, set against the predictions of the designers.

The new database shows the performance of each building in both figures and clearly presented graphs, so design intention can be compared with built reality, and projects can be compared with each other. With the inclusion of detailed design strategies, descriptions and illustrations of the building types and measures taken and technologies employed, the database provides well illustrated and robust benchmarks for what energy and carbon performance levels can be achieved, across a wide range of buildings.

Over the next few weeks, AECB members have a chance to add their projects to the new database in time for the joint national launch in early summer. (Members will of course also be able to continue to add their projects thereafter.) To find out more, contact Eric Parks at [info@retrofitforthefuture.org](mailto:info@retrofitforthefuture.org).

If your project is already on the database, the data has already been automatically transferred into the new version, and you are invited to take this opportunity to update your entries on the new database. Contact Eric for your new username and password, as above.

Eric is also now also helping the AECB continue its work under the Intelligent Energy Europe funded Pass-Net project.

### **Member Discounts – Would Your Company Like To Get Involved?**

As you know AECB members offer discounts on goods and services to other members and we are extremely grateful to these businesses for their generous support. We are currently reviewing and updating the discounts on offer and if your business would like to offer discounts to AECB members please contact Adam Smith on M 07848007868 or [adamsmith@aecb.net](mailto:adamsmith@aecb.net)

### **New AECB Rep For Existing Homes Alliance**

Long-standing AECB member Mark Elton of ECD Architects has agreed to represent AECB on the Existing Homes Alliance Steering Group.

The Existing Homes Alliance, which the AECB has supported from its inception, is committed to transforming the UK housing stock. Alliance members work together, with a coherent and practical agenda, lobbying government, engaging with stakeholders and demonstrating best practice.

Mark is an Associate Director at ECD Architects and is currently working on a number of low carbon retrofit exemplars, including three tower blocks in west London and a number of the Retrofit for the Future projects.

Mark will now represent the AECB at meetings and will bring his own professional refurbishment experience and adding the AECB's independent and practical perspective.

View the Existing Homes alliance website at [www.existinghomesalliance.org.uk](http://www.existinghomesalliance.org.uk)

### **AECB Chair Gets On His Bike.**

AECB chair Chris Herring will be raising money for Practical Action (link to [www.practicalaction.org.uk](http://www.practicalaction.org.uk)) an international skills and technology charity, by cycling to this year's AECB conference. The journey from Green Building Store to CAT is about 140 miles with a lot of hills, and who knows what weather en route. Not only will this raise money for an excellent charity, it will help with our own commitment to the 10:10 Campaign, and keep our chair fit for another year. The down side is he may not be up to leading the dancing at 21st Birthday party.

We are full of admiration for him! If you're impressed as well, you'll be able to sponsor him too – details coming soon.

### **AECB Network Group News**

As we enter into summer I'm writing to update all AECB members, and those that subscribe to network where we are with the development of local groups.

Local groups are doing really well and the feedback I have had from members tells me that this network is growing all the time. I do wish that I could go to all the meetings to catch up with folk and report back on board business that affects us. What is great about local groups is that they exist because people want to meet and chat with fellow enthusiasts. The meetings are very relaxed as people get together because they like to see each other to meet and chat, whilst at the same time being at the very forefront of our field. Those of you who attend regularly tell me that it helps to recharge batteries. An important pattern developing is showing that these groups are not restrictive and people do travel and merge with groups from other areas as we strengthen the association with our shared passion. This month the Milton Keynes group are meeting with the Nottingham group for example. Exciting times!

If you haven't signed up for this year's Conference on October 1/2 this year yet I urge you to do so as places are limited at the Wise building at CAT. Most importantly the Friday night is a party to celebrate 21 years of the AECB's existence, and founder member Keith Hall will be attending to help us celebrate with Sally. The AECB is the world's oldest sustainable building association - something really worth celebrating.

I hope you are all doing OK with your work and hanging in there, we are mostly positive here in Hayward's Heath!. It's great to see how our area of expertise is increasingly in demand so if anyone wants to join a group or has ideas for a meeting, a project they want to share or an idea they want to float please get in contact via the forum or email me [jo@ecotecture.co.uk](mailto:jo@ecotecture.co.uk), I can provide an updated list of email addresses for potential group leaders.

Finally we have been working hard at board level to update the email database. If you are still not receiving emails from us please do contact me so that I can investigate and add you to the lists that are sent out to local leaders.

Best wishes and if we haven't met before I look forward to meeting you at some point in the future, if not the conference!

Joanna Saady, Tel: 0845 026 4636, or [jo@ecotecture.co.uk](mailto:jo@ecotecture.co.uk)

- East Anglia

The next meeting is planned for Wednesday 21st July 2010 at West Suffolk College 1400-1600. calls are open for contributions focusing on materials, products etc. There will also be an Open Mic session where you can have your say about anything. Contact via the forum or leader David Frost [david.frost@wsc.ac.uk](mailto:david.frost@wsc.ac.uk)

- Republic of Stroud.

Run by Linda Martin at Quattro this group covers Worcestershire, Gloucestershire and Herefordshire. The next meeting is pencilled in for June but details are yet to be finalised. please look at the forum or contact linda [lindam@quattro-glos.co.uk](mailto:lindam@quattro-glos.co.uk)

- Brighton/South East Group.

This has about 30 members. The last meeting was on 19th May where SIGA gave a workshop demonstrating airtightness products.

The next meeting will probably be an informal get together at the Earth and Stars in July/August check the forum or email [info@ecotecture.co.uk](mailto:info@ecotecture.co.uk) for details.

- London Group

The London group, with around 50 members has been going about 4 years now and is very active, organised by Carine at Bere Architects contact [Carine.Oberweis@bere.co.uk](mailto:Carine.Oberweis@bere.co.uk). As the last meeting was at the end of April the next is expected late July/August.

- Oxford Group.

Originally co-ordinated by Darren Aspinall this group is being now coordinated by [mrichards@aandgarchitects.com](mailto:mrichards@aandgarchitects.com). As more details are available we will be posting them on the Forum.

- South West Group

The latest meeting was a general get together at Gale and Snowdon's offices in Exeter followed by a CPD session with ProClima hosted by Exeter university.

It was decided that the Group needs to split into 2 as the area is so large and we are looking for someone to host Bristol based meetings. Anyone interested in even a one off please contact "Paul Jennings" [doorfanman@hotmail.com](mailto:doorfanman@hotmail.com) or [jo@ecotecture.co.uk](mailto:jo@ecotecture.co.uk).

- Milton Keynes

This group is lucky to have Alan Budden as its leader. The last meeting was set for Sunday 30th May where the group were teaming up with Nottingham leader Gil Schalom to visit his and fellow AECB member Penny Poyzer's eco house, which is a great example of an eco refurbishment and has featured in some EST publications on refurbishment.

The next MK meeting is scheduled for 8.00 on Wednesday 9th June in the usual venue – up stairs on the New Inn, New Bradwell MK, contact Alan for directions. David Shewan of Parity projects have agreed to come and talk about their Home energy master plan. This enables a detailed energy report showing CO2 and costings for existing properties and detailed proposals of upgrade options with payback times. The survey includes appliances and lifestyle, - and Dan has trained as a surveyor!

Info on Parity at <http://www.parityprojects.com/>, phone 01908 698 364, email [alan@ecodesignconsultants.co.uk](mailto:alan@ecodesignconsultants.co.uk) or visit [www.ecodesignconsultants.co.uk](http://www.ecodesignconsultants.co.uk)

- Nottingham

Last meeting was as above. More meetings to follow - check out the regional groups board on the AECB.net forum.

- Kent

The last meeting took place on May 4th so expect another in July/August. Run by Paul Mallion of Conker Conservation contact [Paul@conkerconservation.co.uk](mailto:Paul@conkerconservation.co.uk) or tel 01227 786900

- North East

This group is run by the very eminent Mark Siddal contact [msiddall@dewjoc-newcastle.com](mailto:msiddall@dewjoc-newcastle.com). Tel 0191 233 2950 for details of the next meeting.

- Hampshire

Last but not least we are delighted to announce the formation of a new group in Hampshire which has its inaugural meet this month

The meeting is in Aldershot, 7 for 7.30 on the 23rd of June at the Bricks and Bread Sustainable Living Centre, Albion Works, Church Lane East, Aldershot, Hampshire GU11 3BT – venue courtesy of Trudy Thompson. See [www.centre@bricksandbread.com](http://www.centre@bricksandbread.com) for directions.

The event has been organised by Debbie Mauger – please let her know at [anadapta@theh2ozone.co.uk](mailto:anadapta@theh2ozone.co.uk) if you wish to attend. There will be refreshments and snacks (proceeds going to the Bricks and Bread Centre).

## **News**

### **Renewable Heat Industry Awaits Clarity from Coalition Government**

UK's renewable heat industry taken aback by closure of major grant programme.

DECC announced on the 24<sup>th</sup> May that the major grant programme for renewable heat had closed with immediate effect.

The announcement means that it will no longer be possible to apply to the Low Carbon Building Programme for grant funding to help pay for technologies like solar thermal, pellet boilers, and heat pumps. The funding stream had been extremely popular and REA were on the verge of warning that money would run out in July, when the surprise announcement was made.

All commitments made for LCBP projects in the pipeline will be honoured, however the remaining £3million left in the LCBP funding pot has been removed as a contribution to the government's cuts programme. The announcement has increased the sense of uncertainty faced by the UK's infant renewable heat industry.

Research undertaken for DECC shows that the faster the UK's renewable heat industry builds capacity the lower the overall cost of implementing the Renewable Heat Incentive. REA hopes that the secondary legislation needed to deliver the RHI will be finalised before Christmas.

The UK is the worst performer on renewable heat in Europe, with the UK's renewable heat industry making up just 0.6% of the heat market. The previous government had committed to bringing in the Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI), which will roughly apply the principles of the internationally successful 'Feed-In' Tariff system to renewable heat. Legal powers for the RHI were achieved with strong cross-party support in the Energy Act 2008 and the RHI is due to come into effect in April 2011. The consultation on the RHI scheme recently closed with the industry strongly behind its general recommendations. The RHI will seek to propel the UK up the EU's renewable heat table with around 12% of UK heat energy expected to come from renewables by 2020. The scheme will make a major contribution to UK CO2 reduction, energy security and UK jobs.

Source: REA, [www.r-e-a.net](http://www.r-e-a.net)

### **The Solar Trade Association Reacts To No-Notification Closure Of Low Carbon Buildings Programme**

Whilst the Solar Trade Association (STA) recognises the new Government's budget predicament and the desire to reduce the deficit as quickly as possible, there is also a requirement to meet a range of targets including the clear aim of obtaining 12% Renewable Heating by 2020. The STA believe pulling the relatively small budget required to support the Low Carbon Buildings Programme (LCBP) until the introduction of the new Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) is a retrogressive step and will cause a loss of jobs in the industry just at the moment the country wants to build capacity to install hundreds of thousands of renewable heating systems each year.

We call on the Government to find a small extra element in its budget to support the LCBP for the next 10 months until the launch of the new incentive.

Howard Johns, Chairman of the STA said "This is very bad news for the solar industry, and a very disappointing move from the new coalition who are aiming to be the greenest Government ever. Solar thermal offers the UK a unique opportunity for jobs, growth and energy security and yet we have once again been undermined for short term gain. At this point we have no idea what the RHI will look like and whether we will get it at all - effectively leaving our sector in limbo, and jobs at risk."

### **New Prime Minister Promises "Greenest Government Ever"**

The new Prime Minister David Cameron pledged to make his coalition the "greenest government ever" and committed central departments to a 10% cut in emissions over the next 12 months. The effort, echoing the 10:10 campaign launched last year – which only the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) signed up to, will be led by a new government steering group.

The steering group will be headed by Energy and Climate Change Secretary Chris Huhne and joined by representatives from key departments and the private sector. Government departments will also publish their energy use online in real time so that the public can hold ministers and civil servants to account.

Central government departments totalling around 8000 buildings were responsible for 1.45 million tonnes of carbon emission in 2008/9, around 7% of public sector emissions. His comments were echoed by Huhne, who has confirmed that he will be joined at DECC by Charles Hendry and Greg Barker.

He also pledged to make it easier for homeowners to improve their energy efficiency and give the power industry the confidence to invest in low-carbon projects.

### **ConDem Coalition Unveils Details Of Energy And Climate Change Plan**

The new Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition government have unveiled details of its programme for its coming term in office, building on the earlier agreement between the two parties. The plans pledge to “use a wide range of levers” to cut emissions, decarbonise the economy and create new green jobs.

However, although the document commits the government to supporting an increase in the EU emission reduction target to 30% by 2020 based on 1990 levels, it provides no further details of the coalition’s previous promise to increase the UK’s renewable energy target. It commitment is also in doubt as a result of the premature closure of the Low Carbon Building Programme and lack of clarity over the new Renewable Heat Incentive.

The new government will continue its predecessor’s commitment to four carbon capture and storage demonstration plants, the roll out of a smart grid and smart meters and the creation of a green investment bank. A major increase in both marine energy and energy-from-waste using anaerobic digestion can also be expected, but the strategy for achieving this remains to be fleshed out.

On the home front, the new government says it will encourage home energy efficiency improvements paid for by savings on energy bills and has committed its own central departments to cutting emissions 10%. It will also present an ‘annual energy statement’ to parliament outlining energy policy. However, the plans also include the scrapping of Home Information Packs, which has been required to provide information about a property when selling, including details of its energy performance.

The plans also do not mention whether the new government will support its predecessor’s commitment to zero-emission new homes by 2016, followed by public sector and commercial buildings by 2019. In fact, the new government’s proposals make very little mention of emissions from the non-domestic sector.

For further information go to [www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/media/409088/pfg\\_coalition.pdf](http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/media/409088/pfg_coalition.pdf)

### **How Green Is The UK ConDem Coalition?**

In a historic agreement, the Conservative and Liberal Democrats are to join forces to form the UK’s first coalition government for 70 years. But what will the new coalition mean for the country’s plans to move towards a low-carbon economy?

Both parties touted their green credentials during the general election campaign, but where do their policies overlap and where could there be dissent? The most significant difference between the Conservatives and the Lib Dems is their stance on nuclear power. The Conservatives are strongly in favour of new nuclear power – in line with the Labour Party – but the Lib Dems remain opposed to any expansion.

Comments by Huhne indicate that the terms of the Lib Dems agreement with the Conservatives will allow them to vote against any measures to move ahead with the construction of new nuclear power stations. Consensus should be easier to reach on fossil fuels, where the future of coal-fired power largely demands on EU policy. All parties are agreed on the need to move ahead with carbon capture and storage projects and just need to sort out support mechanisms for industry, which is ready and waiting to go.

Less clear is how increased development of renewables will be supported. Both parties are agreed on the need for a green investment bank, but just how much and how quickly such a mechanism gets going remains to be seen amid pressures to get the economy under control.

A floor price for carbon – which industry experts agree is vital to encourage private investment in a green economy – is another area where agreement between the two is necessary but may not be high on the agenda. The Lib Dems proposal for a £3.1 billion public investment in job creation and the green economy looks increasingly unlikely in the Conservatives’ push to move ahead with their planned £6 billion cut in spending, and has been thrown into serious doubt with the cancellation of the Low Carbon Building Programme and lack of clarity over the Renewable Heat Incentive.

Where both parties may find room for consensus is on energy efficiency. The Lib Dems’ manifesto promised to make up for an absence of new nuclear capacity with improved energy efficiency, as well as higher levels of renewables. The Conservatives also promised a major effort to up the energy performance of homes across the country.

The Renewable Energy Association (REA) echoes these concerns, says the next nine months will be critical. But even sooner than that, the new government will need to submit a renewable energy strategy for the country to the European Commission by the end of June. “This next Parliament will be our last chance to deliver on renewables and carbon targets - and for the UK to seize the vast economic opportunities renewables present,” says REA chief executive Gaynor Hartnell.

### **New Government Should Improve Its Own Energy Efficiency Says Report**

Official figures indicate that the Home Office energy bill topped £1 million last year. Independent price comparison website [energyhelpline.com](http://energyhelpline.com), who requested the figures, says the next government needs to look at ways of improving the energy efficiency of its departments to reduce consumption.

The Home Office came top of the list with an electricity bill of £1.01 million and a gas bill of £39,300, followed by the Foreign Office, which spent £819,186 on electricity and £7256 on gas, and the Department for Transport (£613,923 on electricity and £15,896 on gas). The Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC), which arguably should be leading the way, spent a mere £148,517 on electricity, but £37,630 on gas.

The Home Office responded by saying that it is already working with the Carbon Trust to identify and implement measures to reduce energy consumption where it is high. Last year, the Government announced a £20 million investment in energy efficiency measures to reduce energy usage and costs in central departments. DECC also signed up to the 10:10 campaign, which pledges to reduce emissions by 10% over the next year.

For further information go to [www.energyhelpline.com](http://www.energyhelpline.com)

### **Environmental 'Deficit' Is Greatest Threat To UK, Warns Aldersgate Group**

The environmental 'deficit' poses a greater threat to the future of the UK than its financial deficit, warns the influential coalition of businesses, environmental organisations and MPs, the Aldersgate Group.

The coalition, which includes BT, PepsiCo, Biffa, National Grid and the Environment Agency among its members, says environmental priorities must be tackled with as much urgency as economic issues. The report, *Accelerating the Transition: Priorities for the first 100 days of the new government*, welcomes cross-party agreement on setting up a green investment bank but urges that this must happen swiftly, with a shadow institution set up immediately and legislation passed within a year.

The Group also wants to see any new government publish a national energy efficiency plan and make a commitment to mandatory carbon reporting. Current emissions reporting mechanisms are too complicated and potentially contradictory, says the report, and should be streamlined. The Group also warns that the current carbon price is insufficiently stable to stimulate the necessary level of investment in low-carbon technologies.

A new strategy for low-carbon industry is also needed, says the Group, to target job creation, manufacturing and export potential in specific areas. This should be underpinned by include enhanced capital allowances, tax breaks and national insurance reductions for green industries.

For further information go to [www.aldersgategroup.org.uk](http://www.aldersgategroup.org.uk)

### **UK 2020 Renewables And Emissions Targets: Nearly But Not Quite**

The UK could miss its 2020 European renewable energy target of 15% and a goal of cutting greenhouse gas emissions by 34%, according a report from Cambridge Econometrics.

The UK looks likely to meet its first two carbon budgets up to 2017, but may not meet its third budget covering 2018-2022 unless the new coalition government implements strong policies promoting renewable energy and energy efficiency, says the report. If the third carbon budget is not met, the 34% reduction in emissions by 2020 may be in jeopardy.

Thanks to the economic downturn that has reduced industrial output, as well as a switch from coal to more nuclear power, CO2 emissions fell 10% in 2009, but are unlikely to decline as much in 2010. The renewables target also looks unlikely. The report predicts that renewables will account for 7% of UK electricity sales in 2010, down on the 10%. This could rise to 11% by 2015 – but still well short of the 15% target. Even by 2020, the UK may only have reached 16.5% renewables.

The issue, says Cambridge Econometrics, is that fossil fuels remain central to meeting UK electricity needs and specifically that new gas-fired power stations rather than renewables are being used to plug the gap left by the decommissioning of the country's nuclear and older coal-fired power plants. If the coalition government implements policies to increase the share of renewable energy used to produce electricity, biofuels in transport and renewable fuels for heating, then the targets could be possible.

For further information go to [www.camecon.com/](http://www.camecon.com/)

### **Biodiversity In Built Environment Competition Closes Soon**

RESET's Integrated Habitats Design Competition run in association with CIRIA and livingroofs.org, which AECB is helping to judge, closes to entries on 30th June.

Larger and smaller architectural practices, engineers, landscapers and ecologists, student teams and individuals from right across the UK have already registered for the competition; there is still time to register and send in a project design that emphasises the importance and value of biodiversity in the built environment. See <http://ihdc.org.uk> or click on the grey-and-green logo at [www.aecb.net](http://www.aecb.net).

## **Architects Sought To Help Understand Obstacles To Low Carbon School Design**

The CIBSE Schol Design Group is carrying out research intended to be useful to design teams who are involved in a low carbon school design in the future. It should highlight potential obstacles to the design and allow the team to either avoid or mitigate for the consequences of that obstacle. The research is supported by the AECB, and uses the Delphi process, described as a method "used to obtain the most reliable consensus of opinion of a group of experts".

Stephen Simm from the Center for Energy and the Environment at the University of Exeter is inviting architects from the AECB who are expert in this field to contact him (engineers, client-side representatives and academics have already been recruited).

A link to a summary of the Delphi is at [www.cibse.org/index.cfm?go=groups.details&item=22](http://www.cibse.org/index.cfm?go=groups.details&item=22).

If you are interested in taking part contact Stephen Simm phone 01392 264145, or email: [sps209@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:sps209@exeter.ac.uk)

## **DECC Taken To Task Over Renewable 'Incentive To Heat' Scheme**

Fuel factors for heating systems in Part L Target Emission Rate calculations are due to be reviewed next year when the outgoing government's Renewable Heat Incentive comes into play. However the AECB, the multi-disciplinary sustainability network, has just launched a full-frontal attack on DECC's proposals, claiming they are so badly designed they could end up incentivising some people to use more fossil fuel.

DECC is claiming a world first for the UK scheme, which will give homeowners and businesses alike annual payments for up to 20 years or more if they invest in renewable heat installations such as ground source and air source heat pumps, biomass and renewable CHP. The initiative, due to start in April 2011, was prompted by an EU directive designed to increase the proportion of heat from renewable sources.

Responding to DECC's consultation, the AECB points out that electrically-powered systems such as air source heat pumps can have higher associated emissions than an A-rated boiler, particularly when used with an existing radiator system.

It's not just the details that the AECB does not like. It argues that the basic principle of paying people to use heat is flawed and reduces the incentive to be energy efficient in the first place. There is no precondition for buildings to be energy efficient before the subsidy is claimed under current proposals. The AECB also points out that even options such as biomass have an associated CO2 burden.

The RHI has not insignificant spending implications for the next government too. DECC has suggested that the installation of a ground source heat pump in an average semi-detached house could generate tariff payments worth £1000 a year.

Source: RIBA Practice Bulletin No 543

## **Part L Guidance Published For Design Step Change In October**

An urgent carbon emissions agenda for the construction industry was set out this week in advance of any new UK government taking power tomorrow – the Approved Documents for Part L, which have to deliver a 25% improvement in energy efficiency from October 2010, have arrived.

With less than five months to go before the new regime comes into force, architects will have to ensure that pipeline projects comply with one of the four new Part L ADs, two more for Parts F (ventilation) and J (combustion appliances) and three new official compliance guides that have the same official status (see below).

One of notable changes for designers is the new requirement for CO2 emission rate calculations to be carried out and presented to building control officers – along with a list of specifications used in the calculation – before building work starts on site, in addition to the emissions rate calculation required after completion. The aim here is to reduce the 'performance gap' between designs and realised buildings by making compliance checking more rigorous and highlighting any changes to specification during construction.

The 25% energy performance improvement for new homes brings them broadly into line with Level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes, already established as the baseline for publicly-funded housing projects. SAP2009 must be used for annual CO2 emission rate calculations, while the Target Emission Rate (TER) sees its improvement factor rising to 0.4, reflecting a 40% improvement over 2002 building regulations.

Among the new limiting values for building fabric, party walls make an appearance for the first time, after research revealed that their assumed 'perfect' thermal performance was not borne out in reality.

At the small works end of the scale (domestic and non-domestic), extensions consisting of a conservatory or porch remain exempt from Part L, but only where existing walls, doors and windows are retained and the heating system is not extended into the new accommodation.

For non-domestic buildings, the key change this year is not just the 25% emissions reduction needed, but the aggregated approach that is being introduced that will see some building types have to achieve greater emissions savings to compensate for more problematic types of use.

In support of the new Part L, a revised Part F brings in new requirements for ventilation systems in response to improved airtightness standards, and Part J upgrades the safety of combustion appliances and introduces carbon monoxide alarms for all solid fuel appliances.

Source: RIBA Practice Bulletin No 543

## **Events**

### **Stormwater Attenuation Event – 8<sup>th</sup> June**

9.30am - 3pm, The Genesis Centre, Somerset College, Wellington Road, Taunton

In recent years we have seen increased evidence of severe flooding. The way we deal with the stormwater arising from our buildings and the surfaces immediately adjacent to them has a significant impact on the likelihood of further flood events.

There is therefore a need to revolutionise the whole way we approach stormwater management and change our thinking and methodology from rapid removal to attenuation and storage.

Contact Lorraine Warren on 01823 366365 or email [lorraine.warren@somerset.ac.uk](mailto:lorraine.warren@somerset.ac.uk)

### **Visits To Sustainable Refurbs In North London, 12<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> June.**

On the weekend of 12 -13 June, 10 Victorian and Edwardian houses will be opening their doors to the public. Situated in the boroughs of Camden, Islington, Haringey and Hackney, they exemplify the best in recent eco-renovation practice and techniques.

Ecohouse Weekend Details

Most houses are open AM: 10-1pm and/or PM: 2-5pm. For complete information about the houses, their opening hours and how to get there, visit us online: [www.victori.co.uk](http://www.victori.co.uk)

For those without internet access, please phone: 07732 628174 or 07949 082196

Weekend passes to all houses cost £10 for homeowners, £20 for professionals and must be bought in advance online (see above). Passes cannot be bought at the houses.

For more information contact Simon Burton [simon.h.burton@googlemail.com](mailto:simon.h.burton@googlemail.com)

### **The Road To Zero Carbon - A Conference On Low And Zero Carbon Building – 15<sup>th</sup> June**

Tuesday 15th June 2010. 9.30am – 4.30pm Reading Town Hall, Reading, Berkshire. Fee: £180 plus vat (£211.50)

This is another opportunity to attend this highly rated conference which previously ran in Bristol last February.

The construction and use of buildings contribute nearly half of the UK's CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, which the UK has a legally binding target to reduce to 80% below 1990 levels by 2050. As a result, the Government has set targets to significantly reduce the greenhouse emissions from all buildings.

All new buildings will need to be zero carbon within a decade as Building Regulations progressively tighten, starting with a 25% reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions for all new buildings from October 2010, while CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from existing buildings need to be approaching zero by 2050.

We are seeing a move from demonstration projects, such as those at the BRE Innovation Park, to an increasing number of real-world low and zero carbon buildings being built. This demonstrates that, contrary to claims that it is too expensive or can't be done, it is possible to achieve significant reductions in carbon emissions from buildings.

This major conference will show how the UK is beginning to meet national targets for low and zero carbon building.

For all enquiries, please contact Corina Reay, projects manager: [corina@ecostrust.org.uk](mailto:corina@ecostrust.org.uk) 01458 254349 or visit [www.ecostrust.org.uk](http://www.ecostrust.org.uk)

### **The All Party Parliamentary Climate Change Group AGM And Launch of Zero Carbon Britain 2030**

Attlee Suite, Portcullis House, Wednesday, 16th June, 6 – 8 pm

The launch of 'ZeroCarbonBritain 2030', a groundbreaking report from the Centre for Alternative Technology. This event will also be the APPCCG's 2010 AGM, and our inaugural meeting following the general election.

'ZeroCarbonBritain 2030' brings together cutting-edge findings from leading experts and researchers from a variety of organisations and disciplines, and sets out exactly what Britain must do to meet the challenges posed by the unprecedented scale and speed of the climate threat. The report creates a roadmap for the simultaneous

de-carbonisation and re-vitalisation of UK economy. 'ZeroCarbonBritain 2030' will be immediately relevant to citizens, communities, businesses and policymakers everywhere.

Please enter Portcullis House by the Embankment entrance, and please allow about 15 minutes to pass through security. If you would like to attend this meeting, please contact Catherine Martin on [catherine.martin@carbonneutral.com](mailto:catherine.martin@carbonneutral.com) or tel: 020 7833 6035.

### **Cambridge Open Eco Houses – June 20<sup>th</sup> And 26<sup>th</sup>**

As part of the Cambridge Environment Festival in June, Cambridge Carbon Footprint is organising two Open Eco Houses days: On June 20th and 26th, 15 houses in and around Cambridge will be opening their doors to show examples of how you can renovate your home for low carbon living. You can see inspiring and practical ideas - from simple-to-fit DIY measures to major total refurbishments – including super-insulation, draught exclusion, photovoltaics, solar hot water, ground-source heat pumps, low water use and rainwater storage, double and triple glazing and more!

Our launch event takes the form of 'Eco Renovation Question Time' – on June 15th - when the audience can quiz a panel of experts, find information and chat over refreshments. This is in St Luke's Church Centre, Victoria Road, CB4 3DZ.

Details are at [www.cambridgecarbonfootprint.org](http://www.cambridgecarbonfootprint.org), or email [mary.geddes@cambridgecarbonfootprint.org](mailto:mary.geddes@cambridgecarbonfootprint.org)

## **Courses**

### **Learning From The Land – Courses Encouraging Sustainable Building And Living Techniques.**

Learning From The Land is a local not-for-profit company based near Milverton, Taunton (Somerset), and we have specialist Knowledge Days coming up aimed at construction professionals or others with a serious interest:

- Thurs 17 June - Hemp and Lime wall construction
- Thurs 1 July - Lime plastering

We are also have interest in natural paints, wine making, cob walls permaculture textiles, painting and life drawing.

For more information on these and other courses contact Nicky Saunter on 01823 400696, email [nicky@learningfromtheland.co.uk](mailto:nicky@learningfromtheland.co.uk) or visit [www.learningfromtheland.co.uk](http://www.learningfromtheland.co.uk)

### **Complex Systems, Stories Of Place And Regenerative Design**

A Schumacher College short course, July 2010

We are all becoming aware of the need to understand our world systemically. In the world of design, building and community planning, this insight translates into the awareness that we should try to understand and integrate all the living systems that make up a place.

This approach requires practitioners to combine theory and practice to ask: What is the unique potential in this living system or community and how can this be realised? This course will explore this question by introducing participants to a range of techniques and processes such as pattern recognition, ecological restoration, integration and collaborative thinking.

Participants will learn from leading exponents of this design approach and apply its principles in experiential fieldwork. They will compare and contrast Regenerative Development and Design principles with those of Biomimicry and have the chance to work with Bill Rees, originator of the ecological footprint concept, to contextualise this experiential work within a global perspective.

For full information about this course and Schumacher College visit our website: [www.schumachercollege.org.uk](http://www.schumachercollege.org.uk)

## **Publications**

### **An Introduction To Sustainable Transportation: Policy, Planning And Implementation**

By Preston L. Schiller, Eric C. Bruun and Jeffrey R. Kenworthy, ISBN 9781844076659

Transportation plays a substantial role in the modern world; it provides tremendous benefits to society, but it also imposes significant economic, social and environmental costs. Sustainable transport planning requires integrating environmental, social, and economic factors in order to develop optimal solutions to our many pressing issues, especially carbon emissions and climate change.

This text reflects a fundamental change in transportation decision making. It focuses on accessibility rather than mobility, emphasizes the need to expand the range of options and impacts considered in analysis, and provides practical tools to allow planners, policy makers and the general public to determine the best solution to the transportation problems facing a community.

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

### **How To Live A Low-Carbon Life – Second Edition**

By Chris Goodall, ISBN 9781844079100

Each Westerner is responsible for an average 10 - 20 tonnes of carbon emissions each year (depending on where you live). In How to Live a Low-Carbon Life, Chris Goodall shows how easy it is to take responsibility, providing a comprehensive, one-stop reference guide to calculating your CO2 emissions and reducing them to a more sustainable 2 tonnes a year.

This fully revised and expanded new edition of How to Live a Low-carbon Life takes into account new government targets on emissions reductions and includes up-to-date calculations and extensive graphics clearly laying out the path to a low-carbon life.

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

## **Vacancies**

### **Solar Sales And Operations Support**

Southern Solar is a busy solar electric and solar hot water installation company and we have an opening for an experienced Sales and Operations Support candidate. Your job will centre on supporting the Sussex branch with the installation of solar systems for domestic and commercial clients.

This is a varied and interesting role for the right candidate; Southern Solar is a young, growing company with a great team of people who are passionate about renewable energy.

Core job responsibilities include:

- Sales lead telephone prequalification, talking to customers and giving them guidance on solar for their homes.
- Giving advice on the latest government incentives, the new Feed-in Tariff and future Renewable Heat Incentives.
- Overseeing the sales survey calendar
- Sales database entry and maintenance
- Post installation paperwork completion
- Post installation customer care and satisfaction
- Overseeing the maintenance calendar

Essential skills for this position are:

- Good IT skills and working knowledge of Microsoft Office suite
- Great social and communication skills
- Great organizational skills

As a renewable energy company we are also keen to talk with candidates who have enthusiasm for the renewable solar technologies that we install.

Please visit our website to find out more about our company, [www.southernsolar.co.uk](http://www.southernsolar.co.uk)

Salary Range for this position is £16K to £21K. Our offices are just outside Lewes. Please send your CV to us at [jobs@southernsolar.co.uk](mailto:jobs@southernsolar.co.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.*