



Network

News

July 2009

Grand Designs Great British Refurb campaign

Existing Homes Alliance members have come together with Grand Designs TV presenter Kevin McCloud to launch the Grand Designs Great British Refurb campaign, an exciting new campaign which aims to make it easier and more affordable for people to make their homes more energy efficient.

The energy we use in our homes accounts for a massive 27% of the UK's carbon emissions, making a huge contribution to climate change. We all want to reduce our energy use, and we can all take important steps - like lagging the loft or replacing our light bulbs - but many of us can't afford the upfront costs of more expensive eco-improvements, such as insulating our walls or installing solar heating.

Our vision is a world where UK homes have lower energy bills, are more comfortable and have less impact on the environment.

Please support the campaign by adding your name to the petition to Gordon Brown, which urges the government to do more to help people finance eco-refurbishments in their homes. Kevin McCloud will deliver the campaign to Number 10 in the summer. Please sign the petition at: www.greatbritishrefurb.co.uk and forward to colleagues and contacts.

The Grand Designs Great British Refurb campaign is a partnership between Existing Homes Alliance members WWF, the Energy Saving Trust and the UK Green Building Council, and Grand Designs Magazine.

Appear On Grand Designs

The Grand Designs team is looking for projects for the next series of Kevin McCloud's self build spectacular.

If your project is exciting and unique as well as having green credentials – we would like to hear from you. Projects must fit the following criteria:

- They must be new residential builds or significant residential conversions
- They have unique or interesting elements – something we haven't filmed before - in terms of design, materials, construction techniques, location and/or the people involved
- You are planning to live in the property yourself
- You agree to be involved with the project and are available to be filmed on a regular basis

If you have or know of a project that might be suitable, please contact 01494 733 538 or e-mail granddesigns@talkbackthames.tv

Water Efficiency And Safety: Changes In The Pipeline – Part G Amendments

Changes to the Building Regulations Approved Document G (sanitation, hot water safety and water efficiency) are in the pipeline. From October this year all new-build homes will have protective devices (such as a thermostatic mixing valve) fitted to baths to limit hot water temperature, and will need to meet a new minimum standard of 125 litres of water per person per day to improve water efficiency. These changes were announced by the housing minister in May.

The new requirements also stipulate where greywater and harvested rainwater can be safely used. The government has published a Water Efficiency Calculator for New Dwellings that can be used to estimate water usage for the purposes of both Part G of the Building Regulations and for the Code for Sustainable Homes.

Water Efficiency Calculator is at www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/watercalculator

Part G amendment is at www.thenbs.com/topics/Regulations/articles/partG_amendments.asp

Free Sustainable Product And Innovation Support

If you are an inventor, start-up, service or product manufacturing company – a small or medium-sized business, with less than 250 employees, based in the South East region (Surrey, Hampshire, Isle of Wight, West Sussex, East Sussex, Kent) - you may be eligible for up to two days of free consultancy support.

The Centre for Sustainable Design www.cfsd.org.uk is able to provide free research and advice related to greener product design and development, funding, marketing and commercialisation to eligible small or medium sized

enterprises, through the Eco-MIND project, with EU funding from the INTERREG IVA "2 Seas" Programme. Consultants from The Centre for Sustainable Design (CfSD) have worked multi-nationally in electronics, automotive, engineering, building, finance and marketing services industries in research, development and commercialisation capacities.

To discuss your needs please contact either Tim Woolman, Project Coordinator, twoolman@ucreative.ac.uk, phone 01252 892879, or Martin Charter, Director, mcharter@ucreative.ac.uk

New York Carbon Counter Puts A Number On Greenhouse Gasses

A billboard in New York City lit up Thursday with 13 digits in blazing red. The daunting number: 3,642,649,157,146 (at time of writing) metric tons of greenhouse gases in our atmosphere, and climbing.

Deutsche Bank Asset Management (DeAM) launched the digital display at 33rd Street and 7th Avenue, near busy landmarks including Penn Station and Madison Square Garden, to remind people of the growing problem of climate change.

The financial giant, with significant investments in assets related to climate change, has launched "Know the Number" as part of a broader education campaign. The number, 3.64 trillion metric tons, is based on Massachusetts Institute of Technology measures, including long-lived greenhouse gasses covered by the Kyoto Protocol. It is growing at a rate of roughly 2 billion metric tons each month. The real-time display shows "a running projection of the current quantities based on the latest measurements available. The projection is recalibrated every month as new data are received."

The carbon counter can also be viewed online at www.know-the-number.com/

Source www.rechargenews.com

4th Annual Green Awards Open For Entries

Whether you're an individual or an organisation – now is the time to stand up and be counted for all your hard work and win a Green Award. This is your chance to shine and send out a signal of business or personal excellence to investors, your board, your colleagues and customers.

This year, four new categories have been introduced to acknowledge the ever-increasing breadth and depth of sustainability communications.

Visit www.greenawards.co.uk for entry forms.

UK Won't Hit Its Target For Renewables.

Britain is failing to green its economy, according to previously unpublished reports from the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC). The internal forecasts show that by 2020 the UK will be sourcing only 5% of its energy from renewables, far short of the 15% target we signed up to with the European Commission.

The data, obtained through a Freedom of Information request, will be highly embarrassing for Gordon Brown. The prime minister signed up to the legally-binding target and, if Britain fails to meet it, the government will be liable for substantial fines from Brussels.

Today Britain is one of the worst performers in Europe in terms of renewable energy, sourcing only 2% of its needs from non-fossil-fuel sources such as wind and landfill gas. The prime minister has called for a "green revolution" and in the budget last month Alistair Darling put the sector at the centre of his plans to revitalise the economy.

The chancellor introduced subsidies for biomass and wind generation but fears persist in industry that many projects are uneconomic. The DECC's own forecast, based on present policies and subsidies, seems to support that view. The largest portion of renewables is expected to come from wind followed by hydro power, biomass and sewage processing.

The Tories advocate greater use of micro-generation and building a bio-gas network, but it is unclear how the party would deal with planning restrictions that make it hard to get such projects off the ground. It opposes a Labour-created commission that would take away the power of local councils to assess large infrastructure projects but has not yet announced any alternative.

Source The Sunday Times, May 31, 2009

In addition the Guardian reported that Britain is Europe's 'most glaring failure', according Greenpeace, with only 1.3% of needs sourced from clean energy in 2005. The paper reported that the UK sits third from bottom in the European league table of renewable energy with only Luxembourg and Malta sourcing less of its energy from clean energy sources. The table revealed that the UK received 1% of its energy from renewables in 1995 and just 1.3% a decade later. The UK currently source about 1.8% of our energy from renewable sources.

Read full story at www.guardian.co.uk/business/2009/jun/15/uk-trails-eu-in-renewables

EU Commission's Study Finds Out That European 20% Renewables Target Can Give Jobs To 2.8 Million People

Reaching the 2020 renewable energy targets is expected to lead to around 2.8 million jobs in the renewable energy sector and generate a total value added of around 1.1% of GDP. This is the main conclusion of a European Commission's study on the impact of renewable energy policy on economic growth and employment in the European Union (Employ-RES) which is available in the internet from today. In 2005, the renewable energy sector employed 1.4

million people with a gross value added of 58 billion EUR. The significance of the sector varies strongly among Member States. Biomass, wind and hydro technologies are currently the most important for employment.

In the future significantly more people are expected to be employed in the renewable energy sector, especially in the Member States that joined the EU in 2004 and 2007. Net effects for the overall economy are also expected to be positive. According to the study, the implementation of the renewable energy policy will generate about 410,000 additional jobs and 0.24% additional GDP in the EU-27 in 2020.

The study underlines that stronger policies are needed to reap maximum economic benefits from renewable energy. More innovative technologies such as photovoltaic, offshore wind, solar thermal electricity and second-generation biofuels require more financial support in the short term, but are precisely the key to achieving the EU's 2020 target, which in turn will help maintain the EU's current competitive position in the global market and to increase employment and GDP in the mid term.

More details can be found at http://ec.europa.eu/energy/renewables/studies/index_en.htm.

UK On Track To Double Kyoto Greenhouse Gas Reduction Target

The UK is on track to nearly double its greenhouse gas reduction under the Kyoto Protocol, according to report from the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) which was released to mark World Environment Day. DECC's report to the United Nations shows that the UK greenhouse gas emissions are expected to be 23% below 1990 levels by 2010 – well above the target of 12.5% set by the Kyoto agreement.

Critics, however, argue that the target was low to begin with and has been met largely because of the UK's move away from coal towards gas. Climate Change Minister Joan Ruddock argues the emissions reduction is a result of Government, communities and business working together as well. The Government is launching a website ahead of the Copenhagen meeting this December that provide information about the potential global climate change deal.

Meanwhile, Business Secretary Lord Mandelson outlined the Government's forthcoming low-carbon strategy at a speech in London. He said that the Government's plans are based on three key ideas: "a long term strategic approach from government; a pragmatic approach to the role of both markets and the state, and a recognition that we should be actively equipping our people to supply the demand created by climate change targets."

In practice, this could mean that the Government might intervene in the market to raise the cost carbon or in the public sector to ensure that the necessary infrastructure – such as a smart electricity grid or electric car recharging network – is in place. The Government will also be considering a new public-private innovation fund to support the development and commercialisation of low-carbon technologies. It will also aim to lead the way in generating demand for these technologies through incentives for consumers or government procurement programmes for low-carbon vehicle fleets, for example.

For more: www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/what_we_do/change_energy/the_issue/strategy/strategy.aspx

UK Government Details Climate Change Action Plan

The UK Government has launched a five point action plan for the country in response to the threat of climate change. The plan, which is being led by the Departments of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) and Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), is designed to reduce emissions and prepare for the changes in climate that are already inevitable.

Publication of the action plan coincides with Defra's latest UK Climate Projections, provided by the Met Office, which paint a picture of soaring summer temperatures and water shortages, more extreme weather and rising sea levels. The five action points include a commitment to reaching international agreement on climate change measures at Copenhagen in December.

At the end of this month, DECC Minister Ed Miliband will set out the Government's ambitions for the Copenhagen meeting. As part of these efforts, the action plan reiterates the Government's commitment to cutting UK emissions by 34% by 2020 and 80% by 2050. It also confirms that a White Paper scheduled for publication in mid-July will detail how these targets are to be met.

For more information go to www.decc.gov.uk/

UK Climate Change Policies 'Dangerously Optimistic'

A leading UK climate scientist today warned MPs that the government's climate change policies are "dangerously optimistic". Professor Kevin Anderson, the director of the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research, said the government's planned carbon cuts – if followed internationally – would have a "50-50 chance" of limiting the rise in global temperatures to 2C. This is the threshold that the EU defines as leading to "dangerous" climate change.

Anderson also said that the two government departments most directly involved with climate change policy, were like "small dogs yapping at the heels" of more powerful departments such as that run by the business secretary, Lord Mandelson. He said that the Department of Energy and Climate Change (Decc), run by Ed Miliband, should be given more power. Anderson was speaking to MPs on the environmental audit committee as part of an inquiry into the UK's carbon budgets. These are legally binding caps on emissions set over five years by the Committee on Climate Change (CCC), the independent body set up to advise the government on how big the cuts should be.

Full story at www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2009/jun/23/anderson-climate-change-uk-emissions

UK Schools Could Save £70 Million In Energy Costs, Says Carbon Trust

UK schools could save £70 million in energy costs if they reduced energy wastage, according to the Carbon Trust. The Carbon Trust is launching a new service tailored specifically for schools to help identify and implement energy saving projects quickly and easily. The service, which is free to schools and colleges with annual energy bills in excess of £50,000, involves an on-site assessment and a report and action plan.

Improved insulation, heating and lighting could save most schools about 20% on their energy bills, says the Carbon Trust. Schools can also apply for interest-free loans to fund energy saving and carbon reduction projects. The Carbon Trust has worked with over 700 schools and colleges since 2001, saving an estimated £16 million on energy bills and 119,000 tonnes of carbon emissions annually.

However, although schools in England currently generate around 94 million tonnes of greenhouse gases every year, only 37% of this comes from the heat and power used in schools. The rest comes from goods and services being transported in and out of schools and pupil and staff travel.

For more information go to www.carbontrust.co.uk/schools

UK Government Should Consolidate Energy Efficiency Programmes, Says Report

The UK Government should rethink its policies aimed at tackling fuel poverty and consolidate its current energy efficiency programmes into one, according to a report out today from a House of Commons Select Committee.

The Government has pledged to eradicate fuel poverty – where 10% or more of a household's income goes on energy bills – in vulnerable homes by 2010 and in all homes by 2016, but looks set to miss these targets. Millions of UK households were in fuel poverty last winter but only 12% of those receiving Winter Fuel Payments (WFPs), an allowance of £250 for the over 60s and £400 for the over 80s, fell into this category.

The Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Select Committee is calling on the Government to start taxing WFPs and stop payments for higher income homes. The excess funds should be fed into a consolidated energy efficiency programme aimed, in the first instance, at the fuel poor.

The best way of tackling fuel poverty is to improve the overall energy efficiency of the country's households, says the report, which can be most rapidly achieved by consolidating the current confusing range of energy efficiency programmes into one. This comprehensive, area-based programme, which could be administered by local authorities, would be aimed at upgrading all homes in England to a SAP level of 65 or higher.

The Government should also create a central budget to support the comprehensive energy efficiency programme, into which energy companies could pay their CERT (Carbon Emissions Reduction Target) contributions.

The Committee concludes that governmental resources for tackling fuel poverty are not only inadequate but getting worse. Although the recent increase is the maximum grant available under the Warm Front scheme, which is the main programme aimed at helping vulnerable households become more energy efficient, the overall budget should be increased rather than repeatedly cut, says the report.

Warm Front should be expanded to cover all hard-to-treat properties, such as older buildings without cavity walls, and additional measure such as ground source heat pumps.

For further information:

www.parliament.uk/parliamentary_committees/environment_food_and_rural_affairs.cfm

Wales Launches Energy Efficient Eco-Home Competition

A competition to design an energy efficient eco-home has been launched by the Welsh Assembly Government and Blaenau Gwent Council in association with the Building Research Establishment (BRE). The organisers are looking for designs for a two-bedroom starter home and a three-bedroom family home that reach a minimum of level 5 of the Code for Sustainable Homes in Wales.

The winning entries will be built at The Works: Ebbw Vale, a former steelworks being regenerated into a mixed use residential development. The Assembly will fund the building of the houses, which will be undertaken by the United Welsh Housing Association. The completed homes will form the heart of a new demonstration centre for sustainable development and construction at The Works. The organisers say the competition is a chance for the design and construction industry to create a 'Welsh Passive House' to rival the low-carbon PassivHaus pioneered in Germany.

The competition organisers are particularly keen to demonstrate that energy efficient homes do not need to be any more expensive to construct than standard homes.

For more information go to www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk/theworks/index.htm

Wales Has Ambitious Plans For A Sustainable Future

The Welsh Assembly Government has committed the region to an ambitious sustainability policy that will encompass all aspects of life from energy generation to transport and healthcare. The Sustainable Development Scheme, which is among only three such legally binding plans in the world, aims to see the former coal-mining region reduce its use of carbon-based energy by 80-90%.

Instead, the region wants to become largely self-sufficient through renewable energy within 20 years. Around 2% of Welsh land, mostly in currently forested areas, could be earmarked for wind farms and the region will also develop

marine and biomass energy sources. South Wales will become one of Europe's 'low-carbon regions' with 40,000 social housing properties fitted out with energy efficiency and microgeneration technologies such as solar panels or wind turbines.

Homes in the region are expected to benefit from a £623 million investment over the next three years in energy efficiency improvements. The plan also aims to increase recycling to 70% by 2025 and local sourcing of food. It will also set out organised transport and walking groups for schools and a £190 million investment in public health. Earlier this month, the Welsh Assembly announced plans to beef up its building standards to meet level three of the Code for Sustainable Homes by 2010, ahead of the rest of the UK.

In addition the Welsh Assembly Government has committed the region to an ambitious sustainability policy that will encompass all aspects of life from energy generation to transport and healthcare. The Sustainable Development Scheme, which is among only three such legally binding plans in the world, aims to see the former coal-mining region reduce its use of carbon-based energy by 80-90%.

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For more information go to <http://wales.gov.uk/?skip=1&lang=en>

Scottish Government Fails To Meet Its Green Targets

The Scottish Government yesterday published its Carbon Management Plan, which aims to reduce its carbon footprint, but its own figures reveal that it is missing its green targets. The Plan, which has been developed in conjunction with the Carbon Trust, sets a target of a 20% reduction in emissions by 2014.

However, the Scottish Government's own Environmental Annual Report for 2007-08, which was published at the same time, revealed that emissions from energy use in government buildings increased 2.5% during that period, while emissions from business travel grew 6%.

While the Scottish Government did make improvements in waste and recycling, there is some room for improvement in the 14 main buildings that comprise the Scottish Government's estate.

For more information go to www.scotland.gov.uk/

UN Chief Says Era Of Renewable Energy Has Begun

Green energy is too often viewed only as a means of combating climate change, when it should also be seen as a way of stimulating an economic revolution, Ban said, speaking before the UN's general assembly in New York.

Ban emphasises that the global energy market is undergoing a period of rapid and irreversible transformation, pointing out that 2008 was the first year that investment into renewable-power generation eclipsed investment into traditional fossil-fuel technology.

His comments came at the launch of the UN's 'Energy and Climate Change Advisory Group', which will advise key UN and other global officials on the thorniest climate change-related issues in the run-up to negotiations in Copenhagen in December. The group includes a number of high-profile players in the renewables industry, including Vattenfall chief executive Lars Josefsson.

UN General Assembly President Miguel D'Escoto took the theme one step further, arguing that renewable energy is crucial to the future of humanity's social and economic development. D'Escoto acknowledges that for the time being the renewable-energy sector still requires both financial and political support, but insists that the industry is increasingly able to stand on its own two feet.

Source www.rechargenews.com

Campaign For Triple Glazing

Award-winning sustainable building products supplier Green Building Store believes triple glazing should become the standard choice for windows and doors in the UK to help combat climate change. Windows and doors installed in 2009 should still be around long after 2030, so it is important that they are as thermally efficient as possible. Green Building Store argues that only triple glazed windows and doors will be the correct specification to complement the necessary super insulation measures (The Great British Refurb1) which the existing housing stock needs to address the threat of climate change. Building regulations for new build are likely to move over the next few years towards triple glazing, with 2013 regulations likely to stipulate triple glazing for windows and doors.

As part of Green Building Store's commitment to promoting ultra low energy building design, the company has switched its own Yorkshire based Ecoplus window production to focus on triple glazing and, from 1st June 2009, will be making argon filled triple glazing more affordable by offering it at the same price as double glazing2. Currently, buildings can lose 10-25% of their heat through windows but this can be considerably reduced by using energy efficient glazing. Ecoplus argon triple glazed windows have a window U value of 1.0 W/m2/K, which is 50% better than the requirements of current building regulations. They are also Forestry Stewardship Council certified (FSC Pure) in redwood or oak, as well as being hand finished using natural paints and borate based timber preservatives.

For more information, go to www.greenbuildingstore.co.uk or ring 01484 461705.

Events

Sustainable Building Products Exhibition & Conference 2009 Thursday 2nd July 2009

Due to increased funding the event is FREE for Delegates. The venue is The Darwin Building Lecture Theatre, UCLan, Preston

For more information or to book attendance please contact us on 01772 893963 or email: Bmorgan@uclan.ac.uk

Good Health through Good Homes – 7th July 2009 from 2.15 - 5.30pm

Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment, 1 Kemble Street, London WC2B 4AN

This event will develop the implicit links between good health and good design and conversely, poor design and poor health, both in and out of the home.

Given the enormous rates of change in the industry and the zero carbon targets, the industry will be delivering more and more energy-efficient and air-tight buildings over the coming years. What are the potential health implications of this approach? How indoor air quality is likely to be affected and what are the wider health implications of thermally efficient design, especially if we get it wrong: from dust mites, asthma, mould, condensation and high humidity, to general comfort and overheating. These issues require rigorous examination.

The public health benefits of community and neighbourhood connections could offer new models and standards for development, as build programmes start to grow again. We will discuss the links between access to green spaces and good mental health and well being. What savings might be made in the NHS, if walking and cycling is encouraged through walkable neighbourhood design, there is good access to open spaces and homes offer excellent thermal comfort, ventilation and daylighting, with simple controls? What development and space standards do we need to adopt to enable thriving communities to develop? What value can we put to sustainable design and happy and healthy residents and occupiers?

Presentations will cover the range of current policy for design standards, tools such as Building for Life, measuring, monitoring and case studies.

To book a place at this event please email Lilja: info@goodhomes.org.uk. Free for GHA members, £100 plus VAT (£115.00) for non members

Sustainable Communities And Low Carbon Homes Conferences – 14th July

Two half-day conferences on 14th July at The Corn Exchange, Exeter, Devon

9.00am - 12.30pm - Sustainable Communities Conference

Creating a sustainable community is a highly complex task and one that relies on consideration of a number of broader issues as well as dealing with matters at the individual building level. This conference will focus on some of the key neighbourhood or development-scale issues when it comes to creating sustainable communities, such as transport, green infrastructure and the public realm, energy generation and community involvement.

Expert speakers will provide examples of best practice and the latest thinking in each of these areas, focusing on the challenges that arise when considering these issues and the solutions that exist to overcome them

1.30 - 5.00pm - Low Carbon Homes (Refurbishment) Conference

There is significant and growing momentum for action to refurbish the existing housing stock to create low carbon homes. The conference, which is supported by the Energy Saving Trust, will hear the latest developments on low carbon refurbishment of existing homes from a range of expert speakers and will cover:

- The national perspective, looking at the reductions required in existing housing to ensure we meet our targets out to 2050 and how the current policy response, including the Government's proposed Heat and Energy Saving Strategy, measures up.
- The challenges and opportunities in the South West, including the current situation in the region regarding existing homes, the cost and benefits of action and the role of local authorities.
- Case studies of successful low carbon refurbishments of existing homes, including both individual home refurbishments and street and neighbourhood-scale programmes.

Attend either one of the conferences for £55 (£63.25 inc vat) or both conferences for £90 (£103.50 inc vat)

Go to www.ecostrust.org.uk

11th International Conference On Non-Conventional Materials And Technologies, 6th - 9th September 2009

The University of Bath is hosting the 11th International Conference on Non-Conventional Materials and Technologies (NOCMAT 2009) from the 6th to 9th September 2009. The theme of the conference is 'Materials for sustainable and affordable construction'. There will be over 100 papers presented by delegates from over 30 countries.

For further information on registration and other details please see: www.bath.ac.uk/ace/nocmat2009/ or email ace-conferences@bath.ac.uk.

Westminster Energy, Environment & Transport Forum Keynote Seminar, 16th September 2009

The Heat and Energy Saving Strategy – reducing emissions from existing homes, Morning, Wednesday 16th September 2009, Central London

This seminar examines the most current practical and policy issues relating to emissions from existing buildings as the government consults on the Heat and Energy Saving Strategy. The meeting will bring together key policy makers with industry stakeholders and other interested parties to discuss the potential for the Strategy in terms of incentives for small scale renewables and greater energy efficiency.

Sessions will look at:

- The practicalities of reaching the Government's 2015 target to insulate all cavity walls and lofts where practical;
- The potential for more substantial changes to homes such as solid wall insulation and small scale energy generation;
- The proposed Community Energy Saving Programme and the likely effectiveness of Home Energy Advice; and
- Financial incentives – managing the cost of investment.

The agenda has been structured following consultation with key stakeholders. A regularly updated version is available to view online. The seminar is organised on the basis of strict impartiality by the Westminster Energy, Environment & Transport Forum.

A key output of the seminar will be a transcript of the proceedings, sent out within a week of the event to Ministers and officials at DECC, Defra, BERR and other departments affected by the issues, Parliamentarians with a special interest in these areas, and other agencies. It will also be made available more widely. It will include transcripts of all speeches and questions and answers sessions from the day, along with access to PowerPoint presentations, speakers' biographies, an attendee list, an agenda and sponsor information. It is made available subject to strict restrictions on public use, similar to those for Select Committee Uncorrected Evidence, and is intended to provide timely information for interested parties who are unable to attend on the day.

To book places, please go to www.westminsterforumprojects.co.uk/weetforum/bookhess_govparl.html.

Construct Canada, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, 2 - 4 December 2009

UK Trade & Investment will be hosting a stand at Construct Canada and are pleased to issue an invitation for UK companies to participate in Canada's largest annual building and construction trade show. This is an excellent opportunity for British companies to gain exposure at this event. Space is available on a first come basis; exhibitors can send literature and samples or participate in person.

For more information contact Isabell French, Trade Associate, UK Trade & Investment, British Consulate General, 777 Bay Street, Suite 2800, Toronto, M5G 2G2. Phone 416 593 1290 ext 2258, email isabell.french@fco.gov.uk or visit www.uktradeinvestcanada.org

Courses

Napier University Timber Construction Courses

The Centre for Timber Engineering cte@napier.ac.uk at Edinburgh Napier University offers a range of courses related to the construction and engineering uses of timber. Anyone wishing to join the one of the courses listed below in September 2009 should apply as soon as is possible www.courses.napier.ac.uk.

- BSc Civil & Timber Engineering.
- BSc Timber Engineering.
- MSc Timber Industry Management.

The two MSc course are available in three ways, namely: full-time, part-time and Distance Learning.

Four short CPD courses are also available and can be started at any time. The courses are

- IWSc Foundation,
- Trussed Rafters for Design Technicians,
- Moisture in wood and timber drying,
- Supervisory Management.

For a discussion on the courses, fees, application etc, please contact CTE's Alastair Stupart on 0131 455 2831, or email a.stupart@napier.ac.uk

Make Mine An Eco-Home - Sustainable Construction And Renewable Energy Technology Courses

Two half-day courses on 16th July at Great Bow Wharf, Langport

9.00am - 12.30pm - Sustainable Construction course.

1.30pm - 4.30pm - Renewable Energy Technologies course.

Participants are encouraged to bring their own source material and designs to contribute to the course and enliven the discussion.

The course will be delivered by Charles Couzens - the Director of Ecos Trust. Ecos is a leading sustainable developer in the UK, having recently completed the first Code for Sustainable Homes level 5 development of five houses in Somerset. It also completed an award winning development of 12 sustainable homes and the sustainable refurbishment of a listed warehouse at Great Bow Yard in Langport, Somerset in 2006. Charles has a background in training in the environmental sector as well as having undertaken his own sustainable self-build project in Somerset in the late 1990s. He was recently elected to the board of Regen SW – the sustainable energy agency for the south-west.

Attend either one of the courses for £60 (£69 inc vat) or both conferences for £96 (£110.40 inc vat).

Go to www.ecostrust.org.uk

Vacancies

Project Manager At Sunseed

The Sunseed Trust is a UK registered charity with an educational centre based near Sorbas in the South of Spain. We provide an educational experience for volunteers and visitors who want to learn about living in a low-impact and sustainable way in a beautiful environment with like-minded people.

Sunseed is currently seeking a Project Manager to oversee the operation and development of the project. This post would suit an individual, a couple or a family who are interested in living in a unique and fascinating area of Spain and who want to make a significant difference to the hundreds of visitors who visit the project each year.

This full-time position would be suitable for job-share for a couple, and the village setting is suitable for families with children.

Key conditions for the post are:

1. Salary - £6,000 per annum + full board and lodging on the project
2. 3 year contract subject to 6 month initial probationary period
3. National Insurance Contributions - N.I. contributions will be paid at the voluntary rate (currently £6.55 per week)
4. Hours of Work - the working week is 40 hours, but flexibility is required where some of these will be outside the normal working day, in the evenings and/or at weekends or at short notice
5. Annual Leave Entitlement - paid leave is accrued at the rate of 3 days holiday per month of service completed.

For an informal chat about the position, please contact Don McLean on 0034 950 525770, email sunseedspain@arrakis.es, or Skype "sunseedspain" (you will need to have emailed first, suggesting an approximate time, so as to ensure Sunseed's Skype is on line). If you are a couple or family interested in the position who would like to know more about bringing up children in this environment, please contact John or Rebecca using the above details.

A full job description/person specification are available to download from the Sunseed website at www.sunseed.org.uk.

Closing date for applications is 14 July 2009. Interviews will be held week beginning 20 July 2009. It is hoped that the appointment can be taken up as soon as possible, ideally by 1 Sept. We would like the successful candidate(s) to have visited the project in Spain for at least a week during August in order to familiarise themselves with the project before final commitment is made.

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



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Grand Designs Great British Refurb campaign

Existing Homes Alliance members have come together with Grand Designs TV presenter Kevin McCloud to launch the Grand Designs Great British Refurb campaign, an exciting new campaign which aims to make it easier and more affordable for people to make their homes more energy efficient.

The energy we use in our homes accounts for a massive 27% of the UK's carbon emissions, making a huge contribution to climate change. We all want to reduce our energy use, and we can all take important steps - like lagging the loft or replacing our light bulbs - but many of us can't afford the upfront costs of more expensive eco-improvements, such as insulating our walls or installing solar heating.

Our vision is a world where UK homes have lower energy bills, are more comfortable and have less impact on the environment.

Please support the campaign by adding your name to the petition to Gordon Brown, which urges the government to do more to help people finance eco-refurbishments in their homes. Kevin McCloud will deliver the campaign to Number 10 in the summer. Please sign the petition at: www.greatbritishrefurb.co.uk and forward to colleagues and contacts.

The Grand Designs Great British Refurb campaign is a partnership between Existing Homes Alliance members WWF, the Energy Saving Trust and the UK Green Building Council, and Grand Designs Magazine.

Appear On Grand Designs

The Grand Designs team is looking for projects for the next series of Kevin McCloud's self build spectacular.

If your project is exciting and unique as well as having green credentials – we would like to hear from you. Projects must fit the following criteria:

- They must be new residential builds or significant residential conversions
- They have unique or interesting elements – something we haven't filmed before - in terms of design, materials, construction techniques, location and/or the people involved
- You are planning to live in the property yourself
- You agree to be involved with the project and are available to be filmed on a regular basis

If you have or know of a project that might be suitable, please contact 01494 733 538 or e-mail granddesigns@talkbackthames.tv

Water Efficiency And Safety: Changes In The Pipeline – Part G Amendments

Changes to the Building Regulations Approved Document G (sanitation, hot water safety and water efficiency) are in the pipeline. From October this year all new-build homes will have protective devices (such as a thermostatic mixing valve) fitted to baths to limit hot water temperature, and will need to meet a new minimum standard of 125 litres of water per person per day to improve water efficiency. These changes were announced by the housing minister in May.

The new requirements also stipulate where greywater and harvested rainwater can be safely used. The government has published a Water Efficiency Calculator for New Dwellings that can be used to estimate water usage for the purposes of both Part G of the Building Regulations and for the Code for Sustainable Homes.

Water Efficiency Calculator is at www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/watercalculator

Part G amendment is at www.thenbs.com/topics/Regulations/articles/partG_amendments.asp

Free Sustainable Product And Innovation Support

If you are an inventor, start-up, service or product manufacturing company – a small or medium-sized business, with less than 250 employees, based in the South East region (Surrey, Hampshire, Isle of Wight, West Sussex, East Sussex, Kent) - you may be eligible for up to two days of free consultancy support.

The Centre for Sustainable Design www.cfsd.org.uk is able to provide free research and advice related to greener product design and development, funding, marketing and commercialisation to eligible small or medium sized

enterprises, through the Eco-MIND project, with EU funding from the INTERREG IVA "2 Seas" Programme. Consultants from The Centre for Sustainable Design (CfSD) have worked multi-nationally in electronics, automotive, engineering, building, finance and marketing services industries in research, development and commercialisation capacities.

To discuss your needs please contact either Tim Woolman, Project Coordinator, twoolman@ucreative.ac.uk, phone 01252 892879, or Martin Charter, Director, mcharter@ucreative.ac.uk

New York Carbon Counter Puts A Number On Greenhouse Gasses

A billboard in New York City lit up Thursday with 13 digits in blazing red. The daunting number: 3,642,649,157,146 (at time of writing) metric tons of greenhouse gases in our atmosphere, and climbing.

Deutsche Bank Asset Management (DeAM) launched the digital display at 33rd Street and 7th Avenue, near busy landmarks including Penn Station and Madison Square Garden, to remind people of the growing problem of climate change.

The financial giant, with significant investments in assets related to climate change, has launched "Know the Number" as part of a broader education campaign. The number, 3.64 trillion metric tons, is based on Massachusetts Institute of Technology measures, including long-lived greenhouse gasses covered by the Kyoto Protocol. It is growing at a rate of roughly 2 billion metric tons each month. The real-time display shows "a running projection of the current quantities based on the latest measurements available. The projection is recalibrated every month as new data are received."

The carbon counter can also be viewed online at www.know-the-number.com/

Source www.rechargenews.com

4th Annual Green Awards Open For Entries

Whether you're an individual or an organisation – now is the time to stand up and be counted for all your hard work and win a Green Award. This is your chance to shine and send out a signal of business or personal excellence to investors, your board, your colleagues and customers.

This year, four new categories have been introduced to acknowledge the ever-increasing breadth and depth of sustainability communications.

Visit www.greenawards.co.uk for entry forms.

UK Won't Hit Its Target For Renewables.

Britain is failing to green its economy, according to previously unpublished reports from the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC). The internal forecasts show that by 2020 the UK will be sourcing only 5% of its energy from renewables, far short of the 15% target we signed up to with the European Commission.

The data, obtained through a Freedom of Information request, will be highly embarrassing for Gordon Brown. The prime minister signed up to the legally-binding target and, if Britain fails to meet it, the government will be liable for substantial fines from Brussels.

Today Britain is one of the worst performers in Europe in terms of renewable energy, sourcing only 2% of its needs from non-fossil-fuel sources such as wind and landfill gas. The prime minister has called for a "green revolution" and in the budget last month Alistair Darling put the sector at the centre of his plans to revitalise the economy.

The chancellor introduced subsidies for biomass and wind generation but fears persist in industry that many projects are uneconomic. The DECC's own forecast, based on present policies and subsidies, seems to support that view. The largest portion of renewables is expected to come from wind followed by hydro power, biomass and sewage processing.

The Tories advocate greater use of micro-generation and building a bio-gas network, but it is unclear how the party would deal with planning restrictions that make it hard to get such projects off the ground. It opposes a Labour-created commission that would take away the power of local councils to assess large infrastructure projects but has not yet announced any alternative.

Source The Sunday Times, May 31, 2009

In addition the Guardian reported that Britain is Europe's 'most glaring failure', according Greenpeace, with only 1.3% of needs sourced from clean energy in 2005. The paper reported that the UK sits third from bottom in the European league table of renewable energy with only Luxembourg and Malta sourcing less of its energy from clean energy sources. The table revealed that the UK received 1% of its energy from renewables in 1995 and just 1.3% a decade later. The UK currently source about 1.8% of our energy from renewable sources.

Read full story at www.guardian.co.uk/business/2009/jun/15/uk-trails-eu-in-renewables

EU Commission's Study Finds Out That European 20% Renewables Target Can Give Jobs To 2.8 Million People

Reaching the 2020 renewable energy targets is expected to lead to around 2.8 million jobs in the renewable energy sector and generate a total value added of around 1.1% of GDP. This is the main conclusion of a European Commission's study on the impact of renewable energy policy on economic growth and employment in the European Union (Employ-RES) which is available in the internet from today. In 2005, the renewable energy sector employed 1.4

million people with a gross value added of 58 billion EUR. The significance of the sector varies strongly among Member States. Biomass, wind and hydro technologies are currently the most important for employment.

In the future significantly more people are expected to be employed in the renewable energy sector, especially in the Member States that joined the EU in 2004 and 2007. Net effects for the overall economy are also expected to be positive. According to the study, the implementation of the renewable energy policy will generate about 410,000 additional jobs and 0.24% additional GDP in the EU-27 in 2020.

The study underlines that stronger policies are needed to reap maximum economic benefits from renewable energy. More innovative technologies such as photovoltaic, offshore wind, solar thermal electricity and second-generation biofuels require more financial support in the short term, but are precisely the key to achieving the EU's 2020 target, which in turn will help maintain the EU's current competitive position in the global market and to increase employment and GDP in the mid term.

More details can be found at http://ec.europa.eu/energy/renewables/studies/index_en.htm.

UK On Track To Double Kyoto Greenhouse Gas Reduction Target

The UK is on track to nearly double its greenhouse gas reduction under the Kyoto Protocol, according to report from the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) which was released to mark World Environment Day. DECC's report to the United Nations shows that the UK greenhouse gas emissions are expected to be 23% below 1990 levels by 2010 – well above the target of 12.5% set by the Kyoto agreement.

Critics, however, argue that the target was low to begin with and has been met largely because of the UK's move away from coal towards gas. Climate Change Minister Joan Ruddock argues the emissions reduction is a result of Government, communities and business working together as well. The Government is launching a website ahead of the Copenhagen meeting this December that provide information about the potential global climate change deal.

Meanwhile, Business Secretary Lord Mandelson outlined the Government's forthcoming low-carbon strategy at a speech in London. He said that the Government's plans are based on three key ideas: "a long term strategic approach from government; a pragmatic approach to the role of both markets and the state, and a recognition that we should be actively equipping our people to supply the demand created by climate change targets."

In practice, this could mean that the Government might intervene in the market to raise the cost carbon or in the public sector to ensure that the necessary infrastructure – such as a smart electricity grid or electric car recharging network – is in place. The Government will also be considering a new public-private innovation fund to support the development and commercialisation of low-carbon technologies. It will also aim to lead the way in generating demand for these technologies through incentives for consumers or government procurement programmes for low-carbon vehicle fleets, for example.

For more: www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/what_we_do/change_energy/the_issue/strategy/strategy.aspx

UK Government Details Climate Change Action Plan

The UK Government has launched a five point action plan for the country in response to the threat of climate change. The plan, which is being led by the Departments of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) and Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), is designed to reduce emissions and prepare for the changes in climate that are already inevitable.

Publication of the action plan coincides with Defra's latest UK Climate Projections, provided by the Met Office, which paint a picture of soaring summer temperatures and water shortages, more extreme weather and rising sea levels. The five action points include a commitment to reaching international agreement on climate change measures at Copenhagen in December.

At the end of this month, DECC Minister Ed Miliband will set out the Government's ambitions for the Copenhagen meeting. As part of these efforts, the action plan reiterates the Government's commitment to cutting UK emissions by 34% by 2020 and 80% by 2050. It also confirms that a White Paper scheduled for publication in mid-July will detail how these targets are to be met.

For more information go to www.decc.gov.uk/

UK Climate Change Policies 'Dangerously Optimistic'

A leading UK climate scientist today warned MPs that the government's climate change policies are "dangerously optimistic". Professor Kevin Anderson, the director of the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research, said the government's planned carbon cuts – if followed internationally – would have a "50-50 chance" of limiting the rise in global temperatures to 2C. This is the threshold that the EU defines as leading to "dangerous" climate change.

Anderson also said that the two government departments most directly involved with climate change policy, were like "small dogs yapping at the heels" of more powerful departments such as that run by the business secretary, Lord Mandelson. He said that the Department of Energy and Climate Change (Decc), run by Ed Miliband, should be given more power. Anderson was speaking to MPs on the environmental audit committee as part of an inquiry into the UK's carbon budgets. These are legally binding caps on emissions set over five years by the Committee on Climate Change (CCC), the independent body set up to advise the government on how big the cuts should be.

Full story at www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2009/jun/23/anderson-climate-change-uk-emissions

UK Schools Could Save £70 Million In Energy Costs, Says Carbon Trust

UK schools could save £70 million in energy costs if they reduced energy wastage, according to the Carbon Trust. The Carbon Trust is launching a new service tailored specifically for schools to help identify and implement energy saving projects quickly and easily. The service, which is free to schools and colleges with annual energy bills in excess of £50,000, involves an on-site assessment and a report and action plan.

Improved insulation, heating and lighting could save most schools about 20% on their energy bills, says the Carbon Trust. Schools can also apply for interest-free loans to fund energy saving and carbon reduction projects. The Carbon Trust has worked with over 700 schools and colleges since 2001, saving an estimated £16 million on energy bills and 119,000 tonnes of carbon emissions annually.

However, although schools in England currently generate around 94 million tonnes of greenhouse gases every year, only 37% of this comes from the heat and power used in schools. The rest comes from goods and services being transported in and out of schools and pupil and staff travel.

For more information go to www.carbontrust.co.uk/schools

UK Government Should Consolidate Energy Efficiency Programmes, Says Report

The UK Government should rethink its policies aimed at tackling fuel poverty and consolidate its current energy efficiency programmes into one, according to a report out today from a House of Commons Select Committee.

The Government has pledged to eradicate fuel poverty – where 10% or more of a household's income goes on energy bills – in vulnerable homes by 2010 and in all homes by 2016, but looks set to miss these targets. Millions of UK households were in fuel poverty last winter but only 12% of those receiving Winter Fuel Payments (WFPs), an allowance of £250 for the over 60s and £400 for the over 80s, fell into this category.

The Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Select Committee is calling on the Government to start taxing WFPs and stop payments for higher income homes. The excess funds should be fed into a consolidated energy efficiency programme aimed, in the first instance, at the fuel poor.

The best way of tackling fuel poverty is to improve the overall energy efficiency of the country's households, says the report, which can be most rapidly achieved by consolidating the current confusing range of energy efficiency programmes into one. This comprehensive, area-based programme, which could be administered by local authorities, would be aimed at upgrading all homes in England to a SAP level of 65 or higher.

The Government should also create a central budget to support the comprehensive energy efficiency programme, into which energy companies could pay their CERT (Carbon Emissions Reduction Target) contributions.

The Committee concludes that governmental resources for tackling fuel poverty are not only inadequate but getting worse. Although the recent increase is the maximum grant available under the Warm Front scheme, which is the main programme aimed at helping vulnerable households become more energy efficient, the overall budget should be increased rather than repeatedly cut, says the report.

Warm Front should be expanded to cover all hard-to-treat properties, such as older buildings without cavity walls, and additional measure such as ground source heat pumps.

For further information:

www.parliament.uk/parliamentary_committees/environment_food_and_rural_affairs.cfm

Wales Launches Energy Efficient Eco-Home Competition

A competition to design an energy efficient eco-home has been launched by the Welsh Assembly Government and Blaenau Gwent Council in association with the Building Research Establishment (BRE). The organisers are looking for designs for a two-bedroom starter home and a three-bedroom family home that reach a minimum of level 5 of the Code for Sustainable Homes in Wales.

The winning entries will be built at The Works: Ebbw Vale, a former steelworks being regenerated into a mixed use residential development. The Assembly will fund the building of the houses, which will be undertaken by the United Welsh Housing Association. The completed homes will form the heart of a new demonstration centre for sustainable development and construction at The Works. The organisers say the competition is a chance for the design and construction industry to create a 'Welsh Passive House' to rival the low-carbon PassivHaus pioneered in Germany.

The competition organisers are particularly keen to demonstrate that energy efficient homes do not need to be any more expensive to construct than standard homes.

For more information go to www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk/theworks/index.htm

Wales Has Ambitious Plans For A Sustainable Future

The Welsh Assembly Government has committed the region to an ambitious sustainability policy that will encompass all aspects of life from energy generation to transport and healthcare. The Sustainable Development Scheme, which is among only three such legally binding plans in the world, aims to see the former coal-mining region reduce its use of carbon-based energy by 80-90%.

Instead, the region wants to become largely self-sufficient through renewable energy within 20 years. Around 2% of Welsh land, mostly in currently forested areas, could be earmarked for wind farms and the region will also develop

marine and biomass energy sources. South Wales will become one of Europe's 'low-carbon regions' with 40,000 social housing properties fitted out with energy efficiency and microgeneration technologies such as solar panels or wind turbines.

Homes in the region are expected to benefit from a £623 million investment over the next three years in energy efficiency improvements. The plan also aims to increase recycling to 70% by 2025 and local sourcing of food. It will also set out organised transport and walking groups for schools and a £190 million investment in public health. Earlier this month, the Welsh Assembly announced plans to beef up its building standards to meet level three of the Code for Sustainable Homes by 2010, ahead of the rest of the UK.

In addition the Welsh Assembly Government has committed the region to an ambitious sustainability policy that will encompass all aspects of life from energy generation to transport and healthcare. The Sustainable Development Scheme, which is among only three such legally binding plans in the world, aims to see the former coal-mining region reduce its use of carbon-based energy by 80-90%.

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For more information go to <http://wales.gov.uk/?skip=1&lang=en>

Scottish Government Fails To Meet Its Green Targets

The Scottish Government yesterday published its Carbon Management Plan, which aims to reduce its carbon footprint, but its own figures reveal that it is missing its green targets. The Plan, which has been developed in conjunction with the Carbon Trust, sets a target of a 20% reduction in emissions by 2014.

However, the Scottish Government's own Environmental Annual Report for 2007-08, which was published at the same time, revealed that emissions from energy use in government buildings increased 2.5% during that period, while emissions from business travel grew 6%.

While the Scottish Government did make improvements in waste and recycling, there is some room for improvement in the 14 main buildings that comprise the Scottish Government's estate.

For more information go to www.scotland.gov.uk/

UN Chief Says Era Of Renewable Energy Has Begun

Green energy is too often viewed only as a means of combating climate change, when it should also be seen as a way of stimulating an economic revolution, Ban said, speaking before the UN's general assembly in New York.

Ban emphasises that the global energy market is undergoing a period of rapid and irreversible transformation, pointing out that 2008 was the first year that investment into renewable-power generation eclipsed investment into traditional fossil-fuel technology.

His comments came at the launch of the UN's 'Energy and Climate Change Advisory Group', which will advise key UN and other global officials on the thorniest climate change-related issues in the run-up to negotiations in Copenhagen in December. The group includes a number of high-profile players in the renewables industry, including Vattenfall chief executive Lars Josefsson.

UN General Assembly President Miguel D'Escoto took the theme one step further, arguing that renewable energy is crucial to the future of humanity's social and economic development. D'Escoto acknowledges that for the time being the renewable-energy sector still requires both financial and political support, but insists that the industry is increasingly able to stand on its own two feet.

Source www.rechargenews.com

Campaign For Triple Glazing

Award-winning sustainable building products supplier Green Building Store believes triple glazing should become the standard choice for windows and doors in the UK to help combat climate change. Windows and doors installed in 2009 should still be around long after 2030, so it is important that they are as thermally efficient as possible. Green Building Store argues that only triple glazed windows and doors will be the correct specification to complement the necessary super insulation measures (The Great British Refurb1) which the existing housing stock needs to address the threat of climate change. Building regulations for new build are likely to move over the next few years towards triple glazing, with 2013 regulations likely to stipulate triple glazing for windows and doors.

As part of Green Building Store's commitment to promoting ultra low energy building design, the company has switched its own Yorkshire based Ecoplus window production to focus on triple glazing and, from 1st June 2009, will be making argon filled triple glazing more affordable by offering it at the same price as double glazing2. Currently, buildings can lose 10-25% of their heat through windows but this can be considerably reduced by using energy efficient glazing. Ecoplus argon triple glazed windows have a window U value of 1.0 W/m2/K, which is 50% better than the requirements of current building regulations. They are also Forestry Stewardship Council certified (FSC Pure) in redwood or oak, as well as being hand finished using natural paints and borate based timber preservatives.

For more information, go to www.greenbuildingstore.co.uk or ring 01484 461705.

Events

Sustainable Building Products Exhibition & Conference 2009 Thursday 2nd July 2009

Due to increased funding the event is FREE for Delegates. The venue is The Darwin Building Lecture Theatre, UCLan, Preston

For more information or to book attendance please contact us on 01772 893963 or email: Bmorgan@uclan.ac.uk

Good Health through Good Homes – 7th July 2009 from 2.15 - 5.30pm

Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment, 1 Kemble Street, London WC2B 4AN

This event will develop the implicit links between good health and good design and conversely, poor design and poor health, both in and out of the home.

Given the enormous rates of change in the industry and the zero carbon targets, the industry will be delivering more and more energy-efficient and air-tight buildings over the coming years. What are the potential health implications of this approach? How indoor air quality is likely to be affected and what are the wider health implications of thermally efficient design, especially if we get it wrong: from dust mites, asthma, mould, condensation and high humidity, to general comfort and overheating. These issues require rigorous examination.

The public health benefits of community and neighbourhood connections could offer new models and standards for development, as build programmes start to grow again. We will discuss the links between access to green spaces and good mental health and well being. What savings might be made in the NHS, if walking and cycling is encouraged through walkable neighbourhood design, there is good access to open spaces and homes offer excellent thermal comfort, ventilation and daylighting, with simple controls? What development and space standards do we need to adopt to enable thriving communities to develop? What value can we put to sustainable design and happy and healthy residents and occupiers?

Presentations will cover the range of current policy for design standards, tools such as Building for Life, measuring, monitoring and case studies.

To book a place at this event please email Lilja: info@goodhomes.org.uk. Free for GHA members, £100 plus VAT (£115.00) for non members

Sustainable Communities And Low Carbon Homes Conferences – 14th July

Two half-day conferences on 14th July at The Corn Exchange, Exeter, Devon

9.00am - 12.30pm - Sustainable Communities Conference

Creating a sustainable community is a highly complex task and one that relies on consideration of a number of broader issues as well as dealing with matters at the individual building level. This conference will focus on some of the key neighbourhood or development-scale issues when it comes to creating sustainable communities, such as transport, green infrastructure and the public realm, energy generation and community involvement.

Expert speakers will provide examples of best practice and the latest thinking in each of these areas, focusing on the challenges that arise when considering these issues and the solutions that exist to overcome them

1.30 - 5.00pm - Low Carbon Homes (Refurbishment) Conference

There is significant and growing momentum for action to refurbish the existing housing stock to create low carbon homes. The conference, which is supported by the Energy Saving Trust, will hear the latest developments on low carbon refurbishment of existing homes from a range of expert speakers and will cover:

- The national perspective, looking at the reductions required in existing housing to ensure we meet our targets out to 2050 and how the current policy response, including the Government's proposed Heat and Energy Saving Strategy, measures up.
- The challenges and opportunities in the South West, including the current situation in the region regarding existing homes, the cost and benefits of action and the role of local authorities.
- Case studies of successful low carbon refurbishments of existing homes, including both individual home refurbishments and street and neighbourhood-scale programmes.

Attend either one of the conferences for £55 (£63.25 inc vat) or both conferences for £90 (£103.50 inc vat)

Go to www.ecostrust.org.uk

11th International Conference On Non-Conventional Materials And Technologies, 6th - 9th September 2009

The University of Bath is hosting the 11th International Conference on Non-Conventional Materials and Technologies (NOCMAT 2009) from the 6th to 9th September 2009. The theme of the conference is 'Materials for sustainable and affordable construction'. There will be over 100 papers presented by delegates from over 30 countries.

For further information on registration and other details please see: www.bath.ac.uk/ace/nocmat2009/ or email ace-conferences@bath.ac.uk.

Westminster Energy, Environment & Transport Forum Keynote Seminar, 16th September 2009

The Heat and Energy Saving Strategy – reducing emissions from existing homes, Morning, Wednesday 16th September 2009, Central London

This seminar examines the most current practical and policy issues relating to emissions from existing buildings as the government consults on the Heat and Energy Saving Strategy. The meeting will bring together key policy makers with industry stakeholders and other interested parties to discuss the potential for the Strategy in terms of incentives for small scale renewables and greater energy efficiency.

Sessions will look at:

- The practicalities of reaching the Government's 2015 target to insulate all cavity walls and lofts where practical;
- The potential for more substantial changes to homes such as solid wall insulation and small scale energy generation;
- The proposed Community Energy Saving Programme and the likely effectiveness of Home Energy Advice; and
- Financial incentives – managing the cost of investment.

The agenda has been structured following consultation with key stakeholders. A regularly updated version is available to view online. The seminar is organised on the basis of strict impartiality by the Westminster Energy, Environment & Transport Forum.

A key output of the seminar will be a transcript of the proceedings, sent out within a week of the event to Ministers and officials at DECC, Defra, BERR and other departments affected by the issues, Parliamentarians with a special interest in these areas, and other agencies. It will also be made available more widely. It will include transcripts of all speeches and questions and answers sessions from the day, along with access to PowerPoint presentations, speakers' biographies, an attendee list, an agenda and sponsor information. It is made available subject to strict restrictions on public use, similar to those for Select Committee Uncorrected Evidence, and is intended to provide timely information for interested parties who are unable to attend on the day.

To book places, please go to www.westminsterforumprojects.co.uk/weetforum/bookhess_govparl.html.

Construct Canada, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, 2 - 4 December 2009

UK Trade & Investment will be hosting a stand at Construct Canada and are pleased to issue an invitation for UK companies to participate in Canada's largest annual building and construction trade show. This is an excellent opportunity for British companies to gain exposure at this event. Space is available on a first come basis; exhibitors can send literature and samples or participate in person.

For more information contact Isabell French, Trade Associate, UK Trade & Investment, British Consulate General, 777 Bay Street, Suite 2800, Toronto, M5G 2G2. Phone 416 593 1290 ext 2258, email isabell.french@fco.gov.uk or visit www.uktradeinvestcanada.org

Courses

Napier University Timber Construction Courses

The Centre for Timber Engineering cte@napier.ac.uk at Edinburgh Napier University offers a range of courses related to the construction and engineering uses of timber. Anyone wishing to join the one of the courses listed below in September 2009 should apply as soon as is possible www.courses.napier.ac.uk.

- BSc Civil & Timber Engineering.
- BSc Timber Engineering.
- MSc Timber Industry Management.

The two MSc course are available in three ways, namely: full-time, part-time and Distance Learning.

Four short CPD courses are also available and can be started at any time. The courses are

- IWSc Foundation,
- Trussed Rafters for Design Technicians,
- Moisture in wood and timber drying,
- Supervisory Management.

For a discussion on the courses, fees, application etc, please contact CTE's Alastair Stupart on 0131 455 2831, or email a.stupart@napier.ac.uk

Make Mine An Eco-Home - Sustainable Construction And Renewable Energy Technology Courses

Two half-day courses on 16th July at Great Bow Wharf, Langport

9.00am - 12.30pm - Sustainable Construction course.

1.30pm - 4.30pm - Renewable Energy Technologies course.

Participants are encouraged to bring their own source material and designs to contribute to the course and enliven the discussion.

The course will be delivered by Charles Couzens - the Director of Ecos Trust. Ecos is a leading sustainable developer in the UK, having recently completed the first Code for Sustainable Homes level 5 development of five houses in Somerset. It also completed an award winning development of 12 sustainable homes and the sustainable refurbishment of a listed warehouse at Great Bow Yard in Langport, Somerset in 2006. Charles has a background in training in the environmental sector as well as having undertaken his own sustainable self-build project in Somerset in the late 1990s. He was recently elected to the board of Regen SW – the sustainable energy agency for the south-west.

Attend either one of the courses for £60 (£69 inc vat) or both conferences for £96 (£110.40 inc vat).

Go to www.ecostrust.org.uk

Vacancies

Project Manager At Sunseed

The Sunseed Trust is a UK registered charity with an educational centre based near Sorbas in the South of Spain. We provide an educational experience for volunteers and visitors who want to learn about living in a low-impact and sustainable way in a beautiful environment with like-minded people.

Sunseed is currently seeking a Project Manager to oversee the operation and development of the project. This post would suit an individual, a couple or a family who are interested in living in a unique and fascinating area of Spain and who want to make a significant difference to the hundreds of visitors who visit the project each year.

This full-time position would be suitable for job-share for a couple, and the village setting is suitable for families with children.

Key conditions for the post are:

1. Salary - £6,000 per annum + full board and lodging on the project
2. 3 year contract subject to 6 month initial probationary period
3. National Insurance Contributions - N.I. contributions will be paid at the voluntary rate (currently £6.55 per week)
4. Hours of Work - the working week is 40 hours, but flexibility is required where some of these will be outside the normal working day, in the evenings and/or at weekends or at short notice
5. Annual Leave Entitlement - paid leave is accrued at the rate of 3 days holiday per month of service completed.

For an informal chat about the position, please contact Don McLean on 0034 950 525770, email sunseedspain@arrakis.es, or Skype "sunseedspain" (you will need to have emailed first, suggesting an approximate time, so as to ensure Sunseed's Skype is on line). If you are a couple or family interested in the position who would like to know more about bringing up children in this environment, please contact John or Rebecca using the above details.

A full job description/person specification are available to download from the Sunseed website at www.sunseed.org.uk.

Closing date for applications is 14 July 2009. Interviews will be held week beginning 20 July 2009. It is hoped that the appointment can be taken up as soon as possible, ideally by 1 Sept. We would like the successful candidate(s) to have visited the project in Spain for at least a week during August in order to familiarise themselves with the project before final commitment is made.

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



Network

News

July 2009

Grand Designs Great British Refurb campaign

Existing Homes Alliance members have come together with Grand Designs TV presenter Kevin McCloud to launch the Grand Designs Great British Refurb campaign, an exciting new campaign which aims to make it easier and more affordable for people to make their homes more energy efficient.

The energy we use in our homes accounts for a massive 27% of the UK's carbon emissions, making a huge contribution to climate change. We all want to reduce our energy use, and we can all take important steps - like lagging the loft or replacing our light bulbs - but many of us can't afford the upfront costs of more expensive eco-improvements, such as insulating our walls or installing solar heating.

Our vision is a world where UK homes have lower energy bills, are more comfortable and have less impact on the environment.

Please support the campaign by adding your name to the petition to Gordon Brown, which urges the government to do more to help people finance eco-refurbishments in their homes. Kevin McCloud will deliver the campaign to Number 10 in the summer. Please sign the petition at: www.greatbritishrefurb.co.uk and forward to colleagues and contacts.

The Grand Designs Great British Refurb campaign is a partnership between Existing Homes Alliance members WWF, the Energy Saving Trust and the UK Green Building Council, and Grand Designs Magazine.

Appear On Grand Designs

The Grand Designs team is looking for projects for the next series of Kevin McCloud's self build spectacular.

If your project is exciting and unique as well as having green credentials – we would like to hear from you. Projects must fit the following criteria:

- They must be new residential builds or significant residential conversions
- They have unique or interesting elements – something we haven't filmed before - in terms of design, materials, construction techniques, location and/or the people involved
- You are planning to live in the property yourself
- You agree to be involved with the project and are available to be filmed on a regular basis

If you have or know of a project that might be suitable, please contact 01494 733 538 or e-mail granddesigns@talkbackthames.tv

Water Efficiency And Safety: Changes In The Pipeline – Part G Amendments

Changes to the Building Regulations Approved Document G (sanitation, hot water safety and water efficiency) are in the pipeline. From October this year all new-build homes will have protective devices (such as a thermostatic mixing valve) fitted to baths to limit hot water temperature, and will need to meet a new minimum standard of 125 litres of water per person per day to improve water efficiency. These changes were announced by the housing minister in May.

The new requirements also stipulate where greywater and harvested rainwater can be safely used. The government has published a Water Efficiency Calculator for New Dwellings that can be used to estimate water usage for the purposes of both Part G of the Building Regulations and for the Code for Sustainable Homes.

Water Efficiency Calculator is at www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/watercalculator

Part G amendment is at www.thenbs.com/topics/Regulations/articles/partG_amendments.asp

Free Sustainable Product And Innovation Support

If you are an inventor, start-up, service or product manufacturing company – a small or medium-sized business, with less than 250 employees, based in the South East region (Surrey, Hampshire, Isle of Wight, West Sussex, East Sussex, Kent) - you may be eligible for up to two days of free consultancy support.

The Centre for Sustainable Design www.cfsd.org.uk is able to provide free research and advice related to greener product design and development, funding, marketing and commercialisation to eligible small or medium sized

enterprises, through the Eco-MIND project, with EU funding from the INTERREG IVA "2 Seas" Programme. Consultants from The Centre for Sustainable Design (CfSD) have worked multi-nationally in electronics, automotive, engineering, building, finance and marketing services industries in research, development and commercialisation capacities.

To discuss your needs please contact either Tim Woolman, Project Coordinator, twoolman@ucreative.ac.uk, phone 01252 892879, or Martin Charter, Director, mcharter@ucreative.ac.uk

New York Carbon Counter Puts A Number On Greenhouse Gasses

A billboard in New York City lit up Thursday with 13 digits in blazing red. The daunting number: 3,642,649,157,146 (at time of writing) metric tons of greenhouse gases in our atmosphere, and climbing.

Deutsche Bank Asset Management (DeAM) launched the digital display at 33rd Street and 7th Avenue, near busy landmarks including Penn Station and Madison Square Garden, to remind people of the growing problem of climate change.

The financial giant, with significant investments in assets related to climate change, has launched "Know the Number" as part of a broader education campaign. The number, 3.64 trillion metric tons, is based on Massachusetts Institute of Technology measures, including long-lived greenhouse gasses covered by the Kyoto Protocol. It is growing at a rate of roughly 2 billion metric tons each month. The real-time display shows "a running projection of the current quantities based on the latest measurements available. The projection is recalibrated every month as new data are received."

The carbon counter can also be viewed online at www.know-the-number.com/

Source www.rechargenews.com

4th Annual Green Awards Open For Entries

Whether you're an individual or an organisation – now is the time to stand up and be counted for all your hard work and win a Green Award. This is your chance to shine and send out a signal of business or personal excellence to investors, your board, your colleagues and customers.

This year, four new categories have been introduced to acknowledge the ever-increasing breadth and depth of sustainability communications.

Visit www.greenawards.co.uk for entry forms.

UK Won't Hit Its Target For Renewables.

Britain is failing to green its economy, according to previously unpublished reports from the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC). The internal forecasts show that by 2020 the UK will be sourcing only 5% of its energy from renewables, far short of the 15% target we signed up to with the European Commission.

The data, obtained through a Freedom of Information request, will be highly embarrassing for Gordon Brown. The prime minister signed up to the legally-binding target and, if Britain fails to meet it, the government will be liable for substantial fines from Brussels.

Today Britain is one of the worst performers in Europe in terms of renewable energy, sourcing only 2% of its needs from non-fossil-fuel sources such as wind and landfill gas. The prime minister has called for a "green revolution" and in the budget last month Alistair Darling put the sector at the centre of his plans to revitalise the economy.

The chancellor introduced subsidies for biomass and wind generation but fears persist in industry that many projects are uneconomic. The DECC's own forecast, based on present policies and subsidies, seems to support that view. The largest portion of renewables is expected to come from wind followed by hydro power, biomass and sewage processing.

The Tories advocate greater use of micro-generation and building a bio-gas network, but it is unclear how the party would deal with planning restrictions that make it hard to get such projects off the ground. It opposes a Labour-created commission that would take away the power of local councils to assess large infrastructure projects but has not yet announced any alternative.

Source The Sunday Times, May 31, 2009

In addition the Guardian reported that Britain is Europe's 'most glaring failure', according Greenpeace, with only 1.3% of needs sourced from clean energy in 2005. The paper reported that the UK sits third from bottom in the European league table of renewable energy with only Luxembourg and Malta sourcing less of its energy from clean energy sources. The table revealed that the UK received 1% of its energy from renewables in 1995 and just 1.3% a decade later. The UK currently source about 1.8% of our energy from renewable sources.

Read full story at www.guardian.co.uk/business/2009/jun/15/uk-trails-eu-in-renewables

EU Commission's Study Finds Out That European 20% Renewables Target Can Give Jobs To 2.8 Million People

Reaching the 2020 renewable energy targets is expected to lead to around 2.8 million jobs in the renewable energy sector and generate a total value added of around 1.1% of GDP. This is the main conclusion of a European Commission's study on the impact of renewable energy policy on economic growth and employment in the European Union (Employ-RES) which is available in the internet from today. In 2005, the renewable energy sector employed 1.4

million people with a gross value added of 58 billion EUR. The significance of the sector varies strongly among Member States. Biomass, wind and hydro technologies are currently the most important for employment.

In the future significantly more people are expected to be employed in the renewable energy sector, especially in the Member States that joined the EU in 2004 and 2007. Net effects for the overall economy are also expected to be positive. According to the study, the implementation of the renewable energy policy will generate about 410,000 additional jobs and 0.24% additional GDP in the EU-27 in 2020.

The study underlines that stronger policies are needed to reap maximum economic benefits from renewable energy. More innovative technologies such as photovoltaic, offshore wind, solar thermal electricity and second-generation biofuels require more financial support in the short term, but are precisely the key to achieving the EU's 2020 target, which in turn will help maintain the EU's current competitive position in the global market and to increase employment and GDP in the mid term.

More details can be found at http://ec.europa.eu/energy/renewables/studies/index_en.htm.

UK On Track To Double Kyoto Greenhouse Gas Reduction Target

The UK is on track to nearly double its greenhouse gas reduction under the Kyoto Protocol, according to report from the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) which was released to mark World Environment Day. DECC's report to the United Nations shows that the UK greenhouse gas emissions are expected to be 23% below 1990 levels by 2010 – well above the target of 12.5% set by the Kyoto agreement.

Critics, however, argue that the target was low to begin with and has been met largely because of the UK's move away from coal towards gas. Climate Change Minister Joan Ruddock argues the emissions reduction is a result of Government, communities and business working together as well. The Government is launching a website ahead of the Copenhagen meeting this December that provide information about the potential global climate change deal.

Meanwhile, Business Secretary Lord Mandelson outlined the Government's forthcoming low-carbon strategy at a speech in London. He said that the Government's plans are based on three key ideas: "a long term strategic approach from government; a pragmatic approach to the role of both markets and the state, and a recognition that we should be actively equipping our people to supply the demand created by climate change targets."

In practice, this could mean that the Government might intervene in the market to raise the cost carbon or in the public sector to ensure that the necessary infrastructure – such as a smart electricity grid or electric car recharging network – is in place. The Government will also be considering a new public-private innovation fund to support the development and commercialisation of low-carbon technologies. It will also aim to lead the way in generating demand for these technologies through incentives for consumers or government procurement programmes for low-carbon vehicle fleets, for example.

For more: www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/what_we_do/change_energy/the_issue/strategy/strategy.aspx

UK Government Details Climate Change Action Plan

The UK Government has launched a five point action plan for the country in response to the threat of climate change. The plan, which is being led by the Departments of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) and Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), is designed to reduce emissions and prepare for the changes in climate that are already inevitable.

Publication of the action plan coincides with Defra's latest UK Climate Projections, provided by the Met Office, which paint a picture of soaring summer temperatures and water shortages, more extreme weather and rising sea levels. The five action points include a commitment to reaching international agreement on climate change measures at Copenhagen in December.

At the end of this month, DECC Minister Ed Miliband will set out the Government's ambitions for the Copenhagen meeting. As part of these efforts, the action plan reiterates the Government's commitment to cutting UK emissions by 34% by 2020 and 80% by 2050. It also confirms that a White Paper scheduled for publication in mid-July will detail how these targets are to be met.

For more information go to www.decc.gov.uk/

UK Climate Change Policies 'Dangerously Optimistic'

A leading UK climate scientist today warned MPs that the government's climate change policies are "dangerously optimistic". Professor Kevin Anderson, the director of the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research, said the government's planned carbon cuts – if followed internationally – would have a "50-50 chance" of limiting the rise in global temperatures to 2C. This is the threshold that the EU defines as leading to "dangerous" climate change.

Anderson also said that the two government departments most directly involved with climate change policy, were like "small dogs yapping at the heels" of more powerful departments such as that run by the business secretary, Lord Mandelson. He said that the Department of Energy and Climate Change (Decc), run by Ed Miliband, should be given more power. Anderson was speaking to MPs on the environmental audit committee as part of an inquiry into the UK's carbon budgets. These are legally binding caps on emissions set over five years by the Committee on Climate Change (CCC), the independent body set up to advise the government on how big the cuts should be.

Full story at www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2009/jun/23/anderson-climate-change-uk-emissions

UK Schools Could Save £70 Million In Energy Costs, Says Carbon Trust

UK schools could save £70 million in energy costs if they reduced energy wastage, according to the Carbon Trust. The Carbon Trust is launching a new service tailored specifically for schools to help identify and implement energy saving projects quickly and easily. The service, which is free to schools and colleges with annual energy bills in excess of £50,000, involves an on-site assessment and a report and action plan.

Improved insulation, heating and lighting could save most schools about 20% on their energy bills, says the Carbon Trust. Schools can also apply for interest-free loans to fund energy saving and carbon reduction projects. The Carbon Trust has worked with over 700 schools and colleges since 2001, saving an estimated £16 million on energy bills and 119,000 tonnes of carbon emissions annually.

However, although schools in England currently generate around 94 million tonnes of greenhouse gases every year, only 37% of this comes from the heat and power used in schools. The rest comes from goods and services being transported in and out of schools and pupil and staff travel.

For more information go to www.carbontrust.co.uk/schools

UK Government Should Consolidate Energy Efficiency Programmes, Says Report

The UK Government should rethink its policies aimed at tackling fuel poverty and consolidate its current energy efficiency programmes into one, according to a report out today from a House of Commons Select Committee.

The Government has pledged to eradicate fuel poverty – where 10% or more of a household's income goes on energy bills – in vulnerable homes by 2010 and in all homes by 2016, but looks set to miss these targets. Millions of UK households were in fuel poverty last winter but only 12% of those receiving Winter Fuel Payments (WFPs), an allowance of £250 for the over 60s and £400 for the over 80s, fell into this category.

The Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Select Committee is calling on the Government to start taxing WFPs and stop payments for higher income homes. The excess funds should be fed into a consolidated energy efficiency programme aimed, in the first instance, at the fuel poor.

The best way of tackling fuel poverty is to improve the overall energy efficiency of the country's households, says the report, which can be most rapidly achieved by consolidating the current confusing range of energy efficiency programmes into one. This comprehensive, area-based programme, which could be administered by local authorities, would be aimed at upgrading all homes in England to a SAP level of 65 or higher.

The Government should also create a central budget to support the comprehensive energy efficiency programme, into which energy companies could pay their CERT (Carbon Emissions Reduction Target) contributions.

The Committee concludes that governmental resources for tackling fuel poverty are not only inadequate but getting worse. Although the recent increase is the maximum grant available under the Warm Front scheme, which is the main programme aimed at helping vulnerable households become more energy efficient, the overall budget should be increased rather than repeatedly cut, says the report.

Warm Front should be expanded to cover all hard-to-treat properties, such as older buildings without cavity walls, and additional measure such as ground source heat pumps.

For further information:

www.parliament.uk/parliamentary_committees/environment_food_and_rural_affairs.cfm

Wales Launches Energy Efficient Eco-Home Competition

A competition to design an energy efficient eco-home has been launched by the Welsh Assembly Government and Blaenau Gwent Council in association with the Building Research Establishment (BRE). The organisers are looking for designs for a two-bedroom starter home and a three-bedroom family home that reach a minimum of level 5 of the Code for Sustainable Homes in Wales.

The winning entries will be built at The Works: Ebbw Vale, a former steelworks being regenerated into a mixed use residential development. The Assembly will fund the building of the houses, which will be undertaken by the United Welsh Housing Association. The completed homes will form the heart of a new demonstration centre for sustainable development and construction at The Works. The organisers say the competition is a chance for the design and construction industry to create a 'Welsh Passive House' to rival the low-carbon PassivHaus pioneered in Germany.

The competition organisers are particularly keen to demonstrate that energy efficient homes do not need to be any more expensive to construct than standard homes.

For more information go to www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk/theworks/index.htm

Wales Has Ambitious Plans For A Sustainable Future

The Welsh Assembly Government has committed the region to an ambitious sustainability policy that will encompass all aspects of life from energy generation to transport and healthcare. The Sustainable Development Scheme, which is among only three such legally binding plans in the world, aims to see the former coal-mining region reduce its use of carbon-based energy by 80-90%.

Instead, the region wants to become largely self-sufficient through renewable energy within 20 years. Around 2% of Welsh land, mostly in currently forested areas, could be earmarked for wind farms and the region will also develop

marine and biomass energy sources. South Wales will become one of Europe's 'low-carbon regions' with 40,000 social housing properties fitted out with energy efficiency and microgeneration technologies such as solar panels or wind turbines.

Homes in the region are expected to benefit from a £623 million investment over the next three years in energy efficiency improvements. The plan also aims to increase recycling to 70% by 2025 and local sourcing of food. It will also set out organised transport and walking groups for schools and a £190 million investment in public health. Earlier this month, the Welsh Assembly announced plans to beef up its building standards to meet level three of the Code for Sustainable Homes by 2010, ahead of the rest of the UK.

In addition the Welsh Assembly Government has committed the region to an ambitious sustainability policy that will encompass all aspects of life from energy generation to transport and healthcare. The Sustainable Development Scheme, which is among only three such legally binding plans in the world, aims to see the former coal-mining region reduce its use of carbon-based energy by 80-90%.

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For more information go to <http://wales.gov.uk/?skip=1&lang=en>

Scottish Government Fails To Meet Its Green Targets

The Scottish Government yesterday published its Carbon Management Plan, which aims to reduce its carbon footprint, but its own figures reveal that it is missing its green targets. The Plan, which has been developed in conjunction with the Carbon Trust, sets a target of a 20% reduction in emissions by 2014.

However, the Scottish Government's own Environmental Annual Report for 2007-08, which was published at the same time, revealed that emissions from energy use in government buildings increased 2.5% during that period, while emissions from business travel grew 6%.

While the Scottish Government did make improvements in waste and recycling, there is some room for improvement in the 14 main buildings that comprise the Scottish Government's estate.

For more information go to www.scotland.gov.uk/

UN Chief Says Era Of Renewable Energy Has Begun

Green energy is too often viewed only as a means of combating climate change, when it should also be seen as a way of stimulating an economic revolution, Ban said, speaking before the UN's general assembly in New York.

Ban emphasises that the global energy market is undergoing a period of rapid and irreversible transformation, pointing out that 2008 was the first year that investment into renewable-power generation eclipsed investment into traditional fossil-fuel technology.

His comments came at the launch of the UN's 'Energy and Climate Change Advisory Group', which will advise key UN and other global officials on the thorniest climate change-related issues in the run-up to negotiations in Copenhagen in December. The group includes a number of high-profile players in the renewables industry, including Vattenfall chief executive Lars Josefsson.

UN General Assembly President Miguel D'Escoto took the theme one step further, arguing that renewable energy is crucial to the future of humanity's social and economic development. D'Escoto acknowledges that for the time being the renewable-energy sector still requires both financial and political support, but insists that the industry is increasingly able to stand on its own two feet.

Source www.rechargenews.com

Campaign For Triple Glazing

Award-winning sustainable building products supplier Green Building Store believes triple glazing should become the standard choice for windows and doors in the UK to help combat climate change. Windows and doors installed in 2009 should still be around long after 2030, so it is important that they are as thermally efficient as possible. Green Building Store argues that only triple glazed windows and doors will be the correct specification to complement the necessary super insulation measures (The Great British Refurb1) which the existing housing stock needs to address the threat of climate change. Building regulations for new build are likely to move over the next few years towards triple glazing, with 2013 regulations likely to stipulate triple glazing for windows and doors.

As part of Green Building Store's commitment to promoting ultra low energy building design, the company has switched its own Yorkshire based Ecoplus window production to focus on triple glazing and, from 1st June 2009, will be making argon filled triple glazing more affordable by offering it at the same price as double glazing2. Currently, buildings can lose 10-25% of their heat through windows but this can be considerably reduced by using energy efficient glazing. Ecoplus argon triple glazed windows have a window U value of 1.0 W/m2/K, which is 50% better than the requirements of current building regulations. They are also Forestry Stewardship Council certified (FSC Pure) in redwood or oak, as well as being hand finished using natural paints and borate based timber preservatives.

For more information, go to www.greenbuildingstore.co.uk or ring 01484 461705.

Events

Sustainable Building Products Exhibition & Conference 2009 Thursday 2nd July 2009

Due to increased funding the event is FREE for Delegates. The venue is The Darwin Building Lecture Theatre, UCLan, Preston

For more information or to book attendance please contact us on 01772 893963 or email: Bmorgan@uclan.ac.uk

Good Health through Good Homes – 7th July 2009 from 2.15 - 5.30pm

Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment, 1 Kemble Street, London WC2B 4AN

This event will develop the implicit links between good health and good design and conversely, poor design and poor health, both in and out of the home.

Given the enormous rates of change in the industry and the zero carbon targets, the industry will be delivering more and more energy-efficient and air-tight buildings over the coming years. What are the potential health implications of this approach? How indoor air quality is likely to be affected and what are the wider health implications of thermally efficient design, especially if we get it wrong: from dust mites, asthma, mould, condensation and high humidity, to general comfort and overheating. These issues require rigorous examination.

The public health benefits of community and neighbourhood connections could offer new models and standards for development, as build programmes start to grow again. We will discuss the links between access to green spaces and good mental health and well being. What savings might be made in the NHS, if walking and cycling is encouraged through walkable neighbourhood design, there is good access to open spaces and homes offer excellent thermal comfort, ventilation and daylighting, with simple controls? What development and space standards do we need to adopt to enable thriving communities to develop? What value can we put to sustainable design and happy and healthy residents and occupiers?

Presentations will cover the range of current policy for design standards, tools such as Building for Life, measuring, monitoring and case studies.

To book a place at this event please email Lilja: info@goodhomes.org.uk. Free for GHA members, £100 plus VAT (£115.00) for non members

Sustainable Communities And Low Carbon Homes Conferences – 14th July

Two half-day conferences on 14th July at The Corn Exchange, Exeter, Devon

9.00am - 12.30pm - Sustainable Communities Conference

Creating a sustainable community is a highly complex task and one that relies on consideration of a number of broader issues as well as dealing with matters at the individual building level. This conference will focus on some of the key neighbourhood or development-scale issues when it comes to creating sustainable communities, such as transport, green infrastructure and the public realm, energy generation and community involvement.

Expert speakers will provide examples of best practice and the latest thinking in each of these areas, focusing on the challenges that arise when considering these issues and the solutions that exist to overcome them

1.30 - 5.00pm - Low Carbon Homes (Refurbishment) Conference

There is significant and growing momentum for action to refurbish the existing housing stock to create low carbon homes. The conference, which is supported by the Energy Saving Trust, will hear the latest developments on low carbon refurbishment of existing homes from a range of expert speakers and will cover:

- The national perspective, looking at the reductions required in existing housing to ensure we meet our targets out to 2050 and how the current policy response, including the Government's proposed Heat and Energy Saving Strategy, measures up.
- The challenges and opportunities in the South West, including the current situation in the region regarding existing homes, the cost and benefits of action and the role of local authorities.
- Case studies of successful low carbon refurbishments of existing homes, including both individual home refurbishments and street and neighbourhood-scale programmes.

Attend either one of the conferences for £55 (£63.25 inc vat) or both conferences for £90 (£103.50 inc vat)

Go to www.ecostrust.org.uk

11th International Conference On Non-Conventional Materials And Technologies, 6th - 9th September 2009

The University of Bath is hosting the 11th International Conference on Non-Conventional Materials and Technologies (NOCMAT 2009) from the 6th to 9th September 2009. The theme of the conference is 'Materials for sustainable and affordable construction'. There will be over 100 papers presented by delegates from over 30 countries.

For further information on registration and other details please see: www.bath.ac.uk/ace/nocmat2009/ or email ace-conferences@bath.ac.uk.

Westminster Energy, Environment & Transport Forum Keynote Seminar, 16th September 2009

The Heat and Energy Saving Strategy – reducing emissions from existing homes, Morning, Wednesday 16th September 2009, Central London

This seminar examines the most current practical and policy issues relating to emissions from existing buildings as the government consults on the Heat and Energy Saving Strategy. The meeting will bring together key policy makers with industry stakeholders and other interested parties to discuss the potential for the Strategy in terms of incentives for small scale renewables and greater energy efficiency.

Sessions will look at:

- The practicalities of reaching the Government's 2015 target to insulate all cavity walls and lofts where practical;
- The potential for more substantial changes to homes such as solid wall insulation and small scale energy generation;
- The proposed Community Energy Saving Programme and the likely effectiveness of Home Energy Advice; and
- Financial incentives – managing the cost of investment.

The agenda has been structured following consultation with key stakeholders. A regularly updated version is available to view online. The seminar is organised on the basis of strict impartiality by the Westminster Energy, Environment & Transport Forum.

A key output of the seminar will be a transcript of the proceedings, sent out within a week of the event to Ministers and officials at DECC, Defra, BERR and other departments affected by the issues, Parliamentarians with a special interest in these areas, and other agencies. It will also be made available more widely. It will include transcripts of all speeches and questions and answers sessions from the day, along with access to PowerPoint presentations, speakers' biographies, an attendee list, an agenda and sponsor information. It is made available subject to strict restrictions on public use, similar to those for Select Committee Uncorrected Evidence, and is intended to provide timely information for interested parties who are unable to attend on the day.

To book places, please go to www.westminsterforumprojects.co.uk/weetforum/bookhess_govparl.html.

Construct Canada, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, 2 - 4 December 2009

UK Trade & Investment will be hosting a stand at Construct Canada and are pleased to issue an invitation for UK companies to participate in Canada's largest annual building and construction trade show. This is an excellent opportunity for British companies to gain exposure at this event. Space is available on a first come basis; exhibitors can send literature and samples or participate in person.

For more information contact Isabell French, Trade Associate, UK Trade & Investment, British Consulate General, 777 Bay Street, Suite 2800, Toronto, M5G 2G2. Phone 416 593 1290 ext 2258, email isabell.french@fco.gov.uk or visit www.uktradeinvestcanada.org

Courses

Napier University Timber Construction Courses

The Centre for Timber Engineering cte@napier.ac.uk at Edinburgh Napier University offers a range of courses related to the construction and engineering uses of timber. Anyone wishing to join the one of the courses listed below in September 2009 should apply as soon as is possible www.courses.napier.ac.uk.

- BSc Civil & Timber Engineering.
- BSc Timber Engineering.
- MSc Timber Industry Management.

The two MSc course are available in three ways, namely: full-time, part-time and Distance Learning.

Four short CPD courses are also available and can be started at any time. The courses are

- IWSc Foundation,
- Trussed Rafters for Design Technicians,
- Moisture in wood and timber drying,
- Supervisory Management.

For a discussion on the courses, fees, application etc, please contact CTE's Alastair Stupart on 0131 455 2831, or email a.stupart@napier.ac.uk

Make Mine An Eco-Home - Sustainable Construction And Renewable Energy Technology Courses

Two half-day courses on 16th July at Great Bow Wharf, Langport

9.00am - 12.30pm - Sustainable Construction course.

1.30pm - 4.30pm - Renewable Energy Technologies course.

Participants are encouraged to bring their own source material and designs to contribute to the course and enliven the discussion.

The course will be delivered by Charles Couzens - the Director of Ecos Trust. Ecos is a leading sustainable developer in the UK, having recently completed the first Code for Sustainable Homes level 5 development of five houses in Somerset. It also completed an award winning development of 12 sustainable homes and the sustainable refurbishment of a listed warehouse at Great Bow Yard in Langport, Somerset in 2006. Charles has a background in training in the environmental sector as well as having undertaken his own sustainable self-build project in Somerset in the late 1990s. He was recently elected to the board of Regen SW – the sustainable energy agency for the south-west.

Attend either one of the courses for £60 (£69 inc vat) or both conferences for £96 (£110.40 inc vat).

Go to www.ecostrust.org.uk

Vacancies

Project Manager At Sunseed

The Sunseed Trust is a UK registered charity with an educational centre based near Sorbas in the South of Spain. We provide an educational experience for volunteers and visitors who want to learn about living in a low-impact and sustainable way in a beautiful environment with like-minded people.

Sunseed is currently seeking a Project Manager to oversee the operation and development of the project. This post would suit an individual, a couple or a family who are interested in living in a unique and fascinating area of Spain and who want to make a significant difference to the hundreds of visitors who visit the project each year.

This full-time position would be suitable for job-share for a couple, and the village setting is suitable for families with children.

Key conditions for the post are:

1. Salary - £6,000 per annum + full board and lodging on the project
2. 3 year contract subject to 6 month initial probationary period
3. National Insurance Contributions - N.I. contributions will be paid at the voluntary rate (currently £6.55 per week)
4. Hours of Work - the working week is 40 hours, but flexibility is required where some of these will be outside the normal working day, in the evenings and/or at weekends or at short notice
5. Annual Leave Entitlement - paid leave is accrued at the rate of 3 days holiday per month of service completed.

For an informal chat about the position, please contact Don McLean on 0034 950 525770, email sunseedspain@arrakis.es, or Skype "sunseedspain" (you will need to have emailed first, suggesting an approximate time, so as to ensure Sunseed's Skype is on line). If you are a couple or family interested in the position who would like to know more about bringing up children in this environment, please contact John or Rebecca using the above details.

A full job description/person specification are available to download from the Sunseed website at www.sunseed.org.uk.

Closing date for applications is 14 July 2009. Interviews will be held week beginning 20 July 2009. It is hoped that the appointment can be taken up as soon as possible, ideally by 1 Sept. We would like the successful candidate(s) to have visited the project in Spain for at least a week during August in order to familiarise themselves with the project before final commitment is made.

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



Network

News

July 2009

Grand Designs Great British Refurb campaign

Existing Homes Alliance members have come together with Grand Designs TV presenter Kevin McCloud to launch the Grand Designs Great British Refurb campaign, an exciting new campaign which aims to make it easier and more affordable for people to make their homes more energy efficient.

The energy we use in our homes accounts for a massive 27% of the UK's carbon emissions, making a huge contribution to climate change. We all want to reduce our energy use, and we can all take important steps - like lagging the loft or replacing our light bulbs - but many of us can't afford the upfront costs of more expensive eco-improvements, such as insulating our walls or installing solar heating.

Our vision is a world where UK homes have lower energy bills, are more comfortable and have less impact on the environment.

Please support the campaign by adding your name to the petition to Gordon Brown, which urges the government to do more to help people finance eco-refurbishments in their homes. Kevin McCloud will deliver the campaign to Number 10 in the summer. Please sign the petition at: www.greatbritishrefurb.co.uk and forward to colleagues and contacts.

The Grand Designs Great British Refurb campaign is a partnership between Existing Homes Alliance members WWF, the Energy Saving Trust and the UK Green Building Council, and Grand Designs Magazine.

Appear On Grand Designs

The Grand Designs team is looking for projects for the next series of Kevin McCloud's self build spectacular.

If your project is exciting and unique as well as having green credentials – we would like to hear from you. Projects must fit the following criteria:

- They must be new residential builds or significant residential conversions
- They have unique or interesting elements – something we haven't filmed before - in terms of design, materials, construction techniques, location and/or the people involved
- You are planning to live in the property yourself
- You agree to be involved with the project and are available to be filmed on a regular basis

If you have or know of a project that might be suitable, please contact 01494 733 538 or e-mail granddesigns@talkbackthames.tv

Water Efficiency And Safety: Changes In The Pipeline – Part G Amendments

Changes to the Building Regulations Approved Document G (sanitation, hot water safety and water efficiency) are in the pipeline. From October this year all new-build homes will have protective devices (such as a thermostatic mixing valve) fitted to baths to limit hot water temperature, and will need to meet a new minimum standard of 125 litres of water per person per day to improve water efficiency. These changes were announced by the housing minister in May.

The new requirements also stipulate where greywater and harvested rainwater can be safely used. The government has published a Water Efficiency Calculator for New Dwellings that can be used to estimate water usage for the purposes of both Part G of the Building Regulations and for the Code for Sustainable Homes.

Water Efficiency Calculator is at www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/watercalculator

Part G amendment is at www.thenbs.com/topics/Regulations/articles/partG_amendments.asp

Free Sustainable Product And Innovation Support

If you are an inventor, start-up, service or product manufacturing company – a small or medium-sized business, with less than 250 employees, based in the South East region (Surrey, Hampshire, Isle of Wight, West Sussex, East Sussex, Kent) - you may be eligible for up to two days of free consultancy support.

The Centre for Sustainable Design www.cfsd.org.uk is able to provide free research and advice related to greener product design and development, funding, marketing and commercialisation to eligible small or medium sized

enterprises, through the Eco-MIND project, with EU funding from the INTERREG IVA "2 Seas" Programme. Consultants from The Centre for Sustainable Design (CfSD) have worked multi-nationally in electronics, automotive, engineering, building, finance and marketing services industries in research, development and commercialisation capacities.

To discuss your needs please contact either Tim Woolman, Project Coordinator, twoolman@ucreative.ac.uk, phone 01252 892879, or Martin Charter, Director, mcharter@ucreative.ac.uk

New York Carbon Counter Puts A Number On Greenhouse Gasses

A billboard in New York City lit up Thursday with 13 digits in blazing red. The daunting number: 3,642,649,157,146 (at time of writing) metric tons of greenhouse gases in our atmosphere, and climbing.

Deutsche Bank Asset Management (DeAM) launched the digital display at 33rd Street and 7th Avenue, near busy landmarks including Penn Station and Madison Square Garden, to remind people of the growing problem of climate change.

The financial giant, with significant investments in assets related to climate change, has launched "Know the Number" as part of a broader education campaign. The number, 3.64 trillion metric tons, is based on Massachusetts Institute of Technology measures, including long-lived greenhouse gasses covered by the Kyoto Protocol. It is growing at a rate of roughly 2 billion metric tons each month. The real-time display shows "a running projection of the current quantities based on the latest measurements available. The projection is recalibrated every month as new data are received."

The carbon counter can also be viewed online at www.know-the-number.com/

Source www.rechargenews.com

4th Annual Green Awards Open For Entries

Whether you're an individual or an organisation – now is the time to stand up and be counted for all your hard work and win a Green Award. This is your chance to shine and send out a signal of business or personal excellence to investors, your board, your colleagues and customers.

This year, four new categories have been introduced to acknowledge the ever-increasing breadth and depth of sustainability communications.

Visit www.greenawards.co.uk for entry forms.

UK Won't Hit Its Target For Renewables.

Britain is failing to green its economy, according to previously unpublished reports from the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC). The internal forecasts show that by 2020 the UK will be sourcing only 5% of its energy from renewables, far short of the 15% target we signed up to with the European Commission.

The data, obtained through a Freedom of Information request, will be highly embarrassing for Gordon Brown. The prime minister signed up to the legally-binding target and, if Britain fails to meet it, the government will be liable for substantial fines from Brussels.

Today Britain is one of the worst performers in Europe in terms of renewable energy, sourcing only 2% of its needs from non-fossil-fuel sources such as wind and landfill gas. The prime minister has called for a "green revolution" and in the budget last month Alistair Darling put the sector at the centre of his plans to revitalise the economy.

The chancellor introduced subsidies for biomass and wind generation but fears persist in industry that many projects are uneconomic. The DECC's own forecast, based on present policies and subsidies, seems to support that view. The largest portion of renewables is expected to come from wind followed by hydro power, biomass and sewage processing.

The Tories advocate greater use of micro-generation and building a bio-gas network, but it is unclear how the party would deal with planning restrictions that make it hard to get such projects off the ground. It opposes a Labour-created commission that would take away the power of local councils to assess large infrastructure projects but has not yet announced any alternative.

Source The Sunday Times, May 31, 2009

In addition the Guardian reported that Britain is Europe's 'most glaring failure', according Greenpeace, with only 1.3% of needs sourced from clean energy in 2005. The paper reported that the UK sits third from bottom in the European league table of renewable energy with only Luxembourg and Malta sourcing less of its energy from clean energy sources. The table revealed that the UK received 1% of its energy from renewables in 1995 and just 1.3% a decade later. The UK currently source about 1.8% of our energy from renewable sources.

Read full story at www.guardian.co.uk/business/2009/jun/15/uk-trails-eu-in-renewables

EU Commission's Study Finds Out That European 20% Renewables Target Can Give Jobs To 2.8 Million People

Reaching the 2020 renewable energy targets is expected to lead to around 2.8 million jobs in the renewable energy sector and generate a total value added of around 1.1% of GDP. This is the main conclusion of a European Commission's study on the impact of renewable energy policy on economic growth and employment in the European Union (Employ-RES) which is available in the internet from today. In 2005, the renewable energy sector employed 1.4

million people with a gross value added of 58 billion EUR. The significance of the sector varies strongly among Member States. Biomass, wind and hydro technologies are currently the most important for employment.

In the future significantly more people are expected to be employed in the renewable energy sector, especially in the Member States that joined the EU in 2004 and 2007. Net effects for the overall economy are also expected to be positive. According to the study, the implementation of the renewable energy policy will generate about 410,000 additional jobs and 0.24% additional GDP in the EU-27 in 2020.

The study underlines that stronger policies are needed to reap maximum economic benefits from renewable energy. More innovative technologies such as photovoltaic, offshore wind, solar thermal electricity and second-generation biofuels require more financial support in the short term, but are precisely the key to achieving the EU's 2020 target, which in turn will help maintain the EU's current competitive position in the global market and to increase employment and GDP in the mid term.

More details can be found at http://ec.europa.eu/energy/renewables/studies/index_en.htm.

UK On Track To Double Kyoto Greenhouse Gas Reduction Target

The UK is on track to nearly double its greenhouse gas reduction under the Kyoto Protocol, according to report from the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) which was released to mark World Environment Day. DECC's report to the United Nations shows that the UK greenhouse gas emissions are expected to be 23% below 1990 levels by 2010 – well above the target of 12.5% set by the Kyoto agreement.

Critics, however, argue that the target was low to begin with and has been met largely because of the UK's move away from coal towards gas. Climate Change Minister Joan Ruddock argues the emissions reduction is a result of Government, communities and business working together as well. The Government is launching a website ahead of the Copenhagen meeting this December that provide information about the potential global climate change deal.

Meanwhile, Business Secretary Lord Mandelson outlined the Government's forthcoming low-carbon strategy at a speech in London. He said that the Government's plans are based on three key ideas: "a long term strategic approach from government; a pragmatic approach to the role of both markets and the state, and a recognition that we should be actively equipping our people to supply the demand created by climate change targets."

In practice, this could mean that the Government might intervene in the market to raise the cost carbon or in the public sector to ensure that the necessary infrastructure – such as a smart electricity grid or electric car recharging network – is in place. The Government will also be considering a new public-private innovation fund to support the development and commercialisation of low-carbon technologies. It will also aim to lead the way in generating demand for these technologies through incentives for consumers or government procurement programmes for low-carbon vehicle fleets, for example.

For more: www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/what_we_do/change_energy/the_issue/strategy/strategy.aspx

UK Government Details Climate Change Action Plan

The UK Government has launched a five point action plan for the country in response to the threat of climate change. The plan, which is being led by the Departments of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) and Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), is designed to reduce emissions and prepare for the changes in climate that are already inevitable.

Publication of the action plan coincides with Defra's latest UK Climate Projections, provided by the Met Office, which paint a picture of soaring summer temperatures and water shortages, more extreme weather and rising sea levels. The five action points include a commitment to reaching international agreement on climate change measures at Copenhagen in December.

At the end of this month, DECC Minister Ed Miliband will set out the Government's ambitions for the Copenhagen meeting. As part of these efforts, the action plan reiterates the Government's commitment to cutting UK emissions by 34% by 2020 and 80% by 2050. It also confirms that a White Paper scheduled for publication in mid-July will detail how these targets are to be met.

For more information go to www.decc.gov.uk/

UK Climate Change Policies 'Dangerously Optimistic'

A leading UK climate scientist today warned MPs that the government's climate change policies are "dangerously optimistic". Professor Kevin Anderson, the director of the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research, said the government's planned carbon cuts – if followed internationally – would have a "50-50 chance" of limiting the rise in global temperatures to 2C. This is the threshold that the EU defines as leading to "dangerous" climate change.

Anderson also said that the two government departments most directly involved with climate change policy, were like "small dogs yapping at the heels" of more powerful departments such as that run by the business secretary, Lord Mandelson. He said that the Department of Energy and Climate Change (Decc), run by Ed Miliband, should be given more power. Anderson was speaking to MPs on the environmental audit committee as part of an inquiry into the UK's carbon budgets. These are legally binding caps on emissions set over five years by the Committee on Climate Change (CCC), the independent body set up to advise the government on how big the cuts should be.

Full story at www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2009/jun/23/anderson-climate-change-uk-emissions

UK Schools Could Save £70 Million In Energy Costs, Says Carbon Trust

UK schools could save £70 million in energy costs if they reduced energy wastage, according to the Carbon Trust. The Carbon Trust is launching a new service tailored specifically for schools to help identify and implement energy saving projects quickly and easily. The service, which is free to schools and colleges with annual energy bills in excess of £50,000, involves an on-site assessment and a report and action plan.

Improved insulation, heating and lighting could save most schools about 20% on their energy bills, says the Carbon Trust. Schools can also apply for interest-free loans to fund energy saving and carbon reduction projects. The Carbon Trust has worked with over 700 schools and colleges since 2001, saving an estimated £16 million on energy bills and 119,000 tonnes of carbon emissions annually.

However, although schools in England currently generate around 94 million tonnes of greenhouse gases every year, only 37% of this comes from the heat and power used in schools. The rest comes from goods and services being transported in and out of schools and pupil and staff travel.

For more information go to www.carbontrust.co.uk/schools

UK Government Should Consolidate Energy Efficiency Programmes, Says Report

The UK Government should rethink its policies aimed at tackling fuel poverty and consolidate its current energy efficiency programmes into one, according to a report out today from a House of Commons Select Committee.

The Government has pledged to eradicate fuel poverty – where 10% or more of a household's income goes on energy bills – in vulnerable homes by 2010 and in all homes by 2016, but looks set to miss these targets. Millions of UK households were in fuel poverty last winter but only 12% of those receiving Winter Fuel Payments (WFPs), an allowance of £250 for the over 60s and £400 for the over 80s, fell into this category.

The Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Select Committee is calling on the Government to start taxing WFPs and stop payments for higher income homes. The excess funds should be fed into a consolidated energy efficiency programme aimed, in the first instance, at the fuel poor.

The best way of tackling fuel poverty is to improve the overall energy efficiency of the country's households, says the report, which can be most rapidly achieved by consolidating the current confusing range of energy efficiency programmes into one. This comprehensive, area-based programme, which could be administered by local authorities, would be aimed at upgrading all homes in England to a SAP level of 65 or higher.

The Government should also create a central budget to support the comprehensive energy efficiency programme, into which energy companies could pay their CERT (Carbon Emissions Reduction Target) contributions.

The Committee concludes that governmental resources for tackling fuel poverty are not only inadequate but getting worse. Although the recent increase is the maximum grant available under the Warm Front scheme, which is the main programme aimed at helping vulnerable households become more energy efficient, the overall budget should be increased rather than repeatedly cut, says the report.

Warm Front should be expanded to cover all hard-to-treat properties, such as older buildings without cavity walls, and additional measure such as ground source heat pumps.

For further information:

www.parliament.uk/parliamentary_committees/environment_food_and_rural_affairs.cfm

Wales Launches Energy Efficient Eco-Home Competition

A competition to design an energy efficient eco-home has been launched by the Welsh Assembly Government and Blaenau Gwent Council in association with the Building Research Establishment (BRE). The organisers are looking for designs for a two-bedroom starter home and a three-bedroom family home that reach a minimum of level 5 of the Code for Sustainable Homes in Wales.

The winning entries will be built at The Works: Ebbw Vale, a former steelworks being regenerated into a mixed use residential development. The Assembly will fund the building of the houses, which will be undertaken by the United Welsh Housing Association. The completed homes will form the heart of a new demonstration centre for sustainable development and construction at The Works. The organisers say the competition is a chance for the design and construction industry to create a 'Welsh Passive House' to rival the low-carbon PassivHaus pioneered in Germany.

The competition organisers are particularly keen to demonstrate that energy efficient homes do not need to be any more expensive to construct than standard homes.

For more information go to www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk/theworks/index.htm

Wales Has Ambitious Plans For A Sustainable Future

The Welsh Assembly Government has committed the region to an ambitious sustainability policy that will encompass all aspects of life from energy generation to transport and healthcare. The Sustainable Development Scheme, which is among only three such legally binding plans in the world, aims to see the former coal-mining region reduce its use of carbon-based energy by 80-90%.

Instead, the region wants to become largely self-sufficient through renewable energy within 20 years. Around 2% of Welsh land, mostly in currently forested areas, could be earmarked for wind farms and the region will also develop

marine and biomass energy sources. South Wales will become one of Europe's 'low-carbon regions' with 40,000 social housing properties fitted out with energy efficiency and microgeneration technologies such as solar panels or wind turbines.

Homes in the region are expected to benefit from a £623 million investment over the next three years in energy efficiency improvements. The plan also aims to increase recycling to 70% by 2025 and local sourcing of food. It will also set out organised transport and walking groups for schools and a £190 million investment in public health. Earlier this month, the Welsh Assembly announced plans to beef up its building standards to meet level three of the Code for Sustainable Homes by 2010, ahead of the rest of the UK.

In addition the Welsh Assembly Government has committed the region to an ambitious sustainability policy that will encompass all aspects of life from energy generation to transport and healthcare. The Sustainable Development Scheme, which is among only three such legally binding plans in the world, aims to see the former coal-mining region reduce its use of carbon-based energy by 80-90%.

Instead, the region wants to become largely self-sufficient through renewable energy within 20 years. Around 2% of Welsh land, mostly in currently forested areas, could be earmarked for wind farms and the region will also develop marine and biomass energy sources.

For more information go to <http://wales.gov.uk/?skip=1&lang=en>

Scottish Government Fails To Meet Its Green Targets

The Scottish Government yesterday published its Carbon Management Plan, which aims to reduce its carbon footprint, but its own figures reveal that it is missing its green targets. The Plan, which has been developed in conjunction with the Carbon Trust, sets a target of a 20% reduction in emissions by 2014.

However, the Scottish Government's own Environmental Annual Report for 2007-08, which was published at the same time, revealed that emissions from energy use in government buildings increased 2.5% during that period, while emissions from business travel grew 6%.

While the Scottish Government did make improvements in waste and recycling, there is some room for improvement in the 14 main buildings that comprise the Scottish Government's estate.

For more information go to www.scotland.gov.uk/

UN Chief Says Era Of Renewable Energy Has Begun

Green energy is too often viewed only as a means of combating climate change, when it should also be seen as a way of stimulating an economic revolution, Ban said, speaking before the UN's general assembly in New York.

Ban emphasises that the global energy market is undergoing a period of rapid and irreversible transformation, pointing out that 2008 was the first year that investment into renewable-power generation eclipsed investment into traditional fossil-fuel technology.

His comments came at the launch of the UN's 'Energy and Climate Change Advisory Group', which will advise key UN and other global officials on the thorniest climate change-related issues in the run-up to negotiations in Copenhagen in December. The group includes a number of high-profile players in the renewables industry, including Vattenfall chief executive Lars Josefsson.

UN General Assembly President Miguel D'Escoto took the theme one step further, arguing that renewable energy is crucial to the future of humanity's social and economic development. D'Escoto acknowledges that for the time being the renewable-energy sector still requires both financial and political support, but insists that the industry is increasingly able to stand on its own two feet.

Source www.rechargenews.com

Campaign For Triple Glazing

Award-winning sustainable building products supplier Green Building Store believes triple glazing should become the standard choice for windows and doors in the UK to help combat climate change. Windows and doors installed in 2009 should still be around long after 2030, so it is important that they are as thermally efficient as possible. Green Building Store argues that only triple glazed windows and doors will be the correct specification to complement the necessary super insulation measures (The Great British Refurb1) which the existing housing stock needs to address the threat of climate change. Building regulations for new build are likely to move over the next few years towards triple glazing, with 2013 regulations likely to stipulate triple glazing for windows and doors.

As part of Green Building Store's commitment to promoting ultra low energy building design, the company has switched its own Yorkshire based Ecoplus window production to focus on triple glazing and, from 1st June 2009, will be making argon filled triple glazing more affordable by offering it at the same price as double glazing2. Currently, buildings can lose 10-25% of their heat through windows but this can be considerably reduced by using energy efficient glazing. Ecoplus argon triple glazed windows have a window U value of 1.0 W/m2/K, which is 50% better than the requirements of current building regulations. They are also Forestry Stewardship Council certified (FSC Pure) in redwood or oak, as well as being hand finished using natural paints and borate based timber preservatives.

For more information, go to www.greenbuildingstore.co.uk or ring 01484 461705.

Events

Sustainable Building Products Exhibition & Conference 2009 Thursday 2nd July 2009

Due to increased funding the event is FREE for Delegates. The venue is The Darwin Building Lecture Theatre, UCLan, Preston

For more information or to book attendance please contact us on 01772 893963 or email: Bmorgan@uclan.ac.uk

Good Health through Good Homes – 7th July 2009 from 2.15 - 5.30pm

Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment, 1 Kemble Street, London WC2B 4AN

This event will develop the implicit links between good health and good design and conversely, poor design and poor health, both in and out of the home.

Given the enormous rates of change in the industry and the zero carbon targets, the industry will be delivering more and more energy-efficient and air-tight buildings over the coming years. What are the potential health implications of this approach? How indoor air quality is likely to be affected and what are the wider health implications of thermally efficient design, especially if we get it wrong: from dust mites, asthma, mould, condensation and high humidity, to general comfort and overheating. These issues require rigorous examination.

The public health benefits of community and neighbourhood connections could offer new models and standards for development, as build programmes start to grow again. We will discuss the links between access to green spaces and good mental health and well being. What savings might be made in the NHS, if walking and cycling is encouraged through walkable neighbourhood design, there is good access to open spaces and homes offer excellent thermal comfort, ventilation and daylighting, with simple controls? What development and space standards do we need to adopt to enable thriving communities to develop? What value can we put to sustainable design and happy and healthy residents and occupiers?

Presentations will cover the range of current policy for design standards, tools such as Building for Life, measuring, monitoring and case studies.

To book a place at this event please email Lilja: info@goodhomes.org.uk. Free for GHA members, £100 plus VAT (£115.00) for non members

Sustainable Communities And Low Carbon Homes Conferences – 14th July

Two half-day conferences on 14th July at The Corn Exchange, Exeter, Devon

9.00am - 12.30pm - Sustainable Communities Conference

Creating a sustainable community is a highly complex task and one that relies on consideration of a number of broader issues as well as dealing with matters at the individual building level. This conference will focus on some of the key neighbourhood or development-scale issues when it comes to creating sustainable communities, such as transport, green infrastructure and the public realm, energy generation and community involvement.

Expert speakers will provide examples of best practice and the latest thinking in each of these areas, focusing on the challenges that arise when considering these issues and the solutions that exist to overcome them

1.30 - 5.00pm - Low Carbon Homes (Refurbishment) Conference

There is significant and growing momentum for action to refurbish the existing housing stock to create low carbon homes. The conference, which is supported by the Energy Saving Trust, will hear the latest developments on low carbon refurbishment of existing homes from a range of expert speakers and will cover:

- The national perspective, looking at the reductions required in existing housing to ensure we meet our targets out to 2050 and how the current policy response, including the Government's proposed Heat and Energy Saving Strategy, measures up.
- The challenges and opportunities in the South West, including the current situation in the region regarding existing homes, the cost and benefits of action and the role of local authorities.
- Case studies of successful low carbon refurbishments of existing homes, including both individual home refurbishments and street and neighbourhood-scale programmes.

Attend either one of the conferences for £55 (£63.25 inc vat) or both conferences for £90 (£103.50 inc vat)

Go to www.ecostrust.org.uk

11th International Conference On Non-Conventional Materials And Technologies, 6th - 9th September 2009

The University of Bath is hosting the 11th International Conference on Non-Conventional Materials and Technologies (NOCMAT 2009) from the 6th to 9th September 2009. The theme of the conference is 'Materials for sustainable and affordable construction'. There will be over 100 papers presented by delegates from over 30 countries.

For further information on registration and other details please see: www.bath.ac.uk/ace/nocmat2009/ or email ace-conferences@bath.ac.uk.

Westminster Energy, Environment & Transport Forum Keynote Seminar, 16th September 2009

The Heat and Energy Saving Strategy – reducing emissions from existing homes, Morning, Wednesday 16th September 2009, Central London

This seminar examines the most current practical and policy issues relating to emissions from existing buildings as the government consults on the Heat and Energy Saving Strategy. The meeting will bring together key policy makers with industry stakeholders and other interested parties to discuss the potential for the Strategy in terms of incentives for small scale renewables and greater energy efficiency.

Sessions will look at:

- The practicalities of reaching the Government's 2015 target to insulate all cavity walls and lofts where practical;
- The potential for more substantial changes to homes such as solid wall insulation and small scale energy generation;
- The proposed Community Energy Saving Programme and the likely effectiveness of Home Energy Advice; and
- Financial incentives – managing the cost of investment.

The agenda has been structured following consultation with key stakeholders. A regularly updated version is available to view online. The seminar is organised on the basis of strict impartiality by the Westminster Energy, Environment & Transport Forum.

A key output of the seminar will be a transcript of the proceedings, sent out within a week of the event to Ministers and officials at DECC, Defra, BERR and other departments affected by the issues, Parliamentarians with a special interest in these areas, and other agencies. It will also be made available more widely. It will include transcripts of all speeches and questions and answers sessions from the day, along with access to PowerPoint presentations, speakers' biographies, an attendee list, an agenda and sponsor information. It is made available subject to strict restrictions on public use, similar to those for Select Committee Uncorrected Evidence, and is intended to provide timely information for interested parties who are unable to attend on the day.

To book places, please go to www.westminsterforumprojects.co.uk/weetforum/bookhess_govparl.html.

Construct Canada, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, 2 - 4 December 2009

UK Trade & Investment will be hosting a stand at Construct Canada and are pleased to issue an invitation for UK companies to participate in Canada's largest annual building and construction trade show. This is an excellent opportunity for British companies to gain exposure at this event. Space is available on a first come basis; exhibitors can send literature and samples or participate in person.

For more information contact Isabell French, Trade Associate, UK Trade & Investment, British Consulate General, 777 Bay Street, Suite 2800, Toronto, M5G 2G2. Phone 416 593 1290 ext 2258, email isabell.french@fco.gov.uk or visit www.uktradeinvestcanada.org

Courses

Napier University Timber Construction Courses

The Centre for Timber Engineering cte@napier.ac.uk at Edinburgh Napier University offers a range of courses related to the construction and engineering uses of timber. Anyone wishing to join the one of the courses listed below in September 2009 should apply as soon as is possible www.courses.napier.ac.uk.

- BSc Civil & Timber Engineering.
- BSc Timber Engineering.
- MSc Timber Industry Management.

The two MSc course are available in three ways, namely: full-time, part-time and Distance Learning.

Four short CPD courses are also available and can be started at any time. The courses are

- IWSc Foundation,
- Trussed Rafters for Design Technicians,
- Moisture in wood and timber drying,
- Supervisory Management.

For a discussion on the courses, fees, application etc, please contact CTE's Alastair Stupart on 0131 455 2831, or email a.stupart@napier.ac.uk

Make Mine An Eco-Home - Sustainable Construction And Renewable Energy Technology Courses

Two half-day courses on 16th July at Great Bow Wharf, Langport

9.00am - 12.30pm - Sustainable Construction course.

1.30pm - 4.30pm - Renewable Energy Technologies course.

Participants are encouraged to bring their own source material and designs to contribute to the course and enliven the discussion.

The course will be delivered by Charles Couzens - the Director of Ecos Trust. Ecos is a leading sustainable developer in the UK, having recently completed the first Code for Sustainable Homes level 5 development of five houses in Somerset. It also completed an award winning development of 12 sustainable homes and the sustainable refurbishment of a listed warehouse at Great Bow Yard in Langport, Somerset in 2006. Charles has a background in training in the environmental sector as well as having undertaken his own sustainable self-build project in Somerset in the late 1990s. He was recently elected to the board of Regen SW – the sustainable energy agency for the south-west.

Attend either one of the courses for £60 (£69 inc vat) or both conferences for £96 (£110.40 inc vat).

Go to www.ecostrust.org.uk

Vacancies

Project Manager At Sunseed

The Sunseed Trust is a UK registered charity with an educational centre based near Sorbas in the South of Spain. We provide an educational experience for volunteers and visitors who want to learn about living in a low-impact and sustainable way in a beautiful environment with like-minded people.

Sunseed is currently seeking a Project Manager to oversee the operation and development of the project. This post would suit an individual, a couple or a family who are interested in living in a unique and fascinating area of Spain and who want to make a significant difference to the hundreds of visitors who visit the project each year.

This full-time position would be suitable for job-share for a couple, and the village setting is suitable for families with children.

Key conditions for the post are:

1. Salary - £6,000 per annum + full board and lodging on the project
2. 3 year contract subject to 6 month initial probationary period
3. National Insurance Contributions - N.I. contributions will be paid at the voluntary rate (currently £6.55 per week)
4. Hours of Work - the working week is 40 hours, but flexibility is required where some of these will be outside the normal working day, in the evenings and/or at weekends or at short notice
5. Annual Leave Entitlement - paid leave is accrued at the rate of 3 days holiday per month of service completed.

For an informal chat about the position, please contact Don McLean on 0034 950 525770, email sunseedspain@arrakis.es, or Skype "sunseedspain" (you will need to have emailed first, suggesting an approximate time, so as to ensure Sunseed's Skype is on line). If you are a couple or family interested in the position who would like to know more about bringing up children in this environment, please contact John or Rebecca using the above details.

A full job description/person specification are available to download from the Sunseed website at www.sunseed.org.uk.

Closing date for applications is 14 July 2009. Interviews will be held week beginning 20 July 2009. It is hoped that the appointment can be taken up as soon as possible, ideally by 1 Sept. We would like the successful candidate(s) to have visited the project in Spain for at least a week during August in order to familiarise themselves with the project before final commitment is made.

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