



May 2015

## AECB News

### AECB Annual Conference and AGM - 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> June 2015

The Edge, University of Sheffield.



building knowledge

2015 Annual Conference | 19-20 June 2015 | Sheffield

### Usable Buildings and Neighbourhoods

PRELIMINARY PROGRAMME NOW AVAILABLE

**Early Booking Deadline: 22 May 2015**

The preliminary programme for this year's conference is now available for download on the AECB website at <http://www.aecb.net/featured/aecb-conference-2015/>. The conference starts at 11.00 on Friday 19 June with registration from 10.00 and will finish at 17.00 on Saturday 20 June with the AGM taking place at 09.00 on the Saturday morning.

Online registration and accommodation booking is open on the website and please note that reduced delegate rates apply for early booking before 22 May 2015 only.

#### Programme Highlights

The conference will see the launch of the AECB's CarbonLite Retrofit Programme, developed over the last 2 years. This will be your chance to see the results of the research undertaken and how we plan to use that research to inform the sector. In addition, the following speakers will give workshops and presentations over the two days:

- **Prof Irena Bauman** – Adaptation for climate change – Case study retrofit/ POE/ Usability at a community/neighbourhood level
- **Alan Clarke** – MVHR & ventilation monitoring
- **Henry Coates** – Insurance issues for non-conventional buildings
- **Nicola Dempsey** – Place-keeping at a community level
- **Nigel Dunnett** – Water, wildlife & well-being: retro-fit green infrastructure on and around buildings
- **Nick Grant** – Value engineering, What's not to love
- **Marianne Heaslip** and **Jonathan Atkinson** – Manchester Community Green Deal Project
- **Mischa Hewitt** – Community based retrofit in Brighton (Workshop to be confirmed)
- **Paul Jennings** and **Helen Brown** – Wilmcote House EnerPhit

- **Dr Ranald Lawrence** – The environmental performance of historical buildings and an excellent critique of POE tools which focus only on buildings as a whole and the individual spaces within buildings
- **Tim Martel** - Omnisense moisture monitoring
- **Mark Siddall** – People are the best measuring instruments
- **Andy Simmonds and Peter Warm:** AECB CarbonLite Retrofit Programme
- **Professor Fionn Stevenson** – Usability in housing and the need for collective rather than individual learning tools
- Plus don't miss your chance to take the **Paul Jennings** Airtightness Challenge.

If you know of any non-members who may be interested please let them know that we now have a non-member rate and we offer day passes. All the details are on the website. Accommodation on campus is limited so please book now to ensure a room onsite.

## Important Notice For All AECB Members

The AECB's 2015 Conference and AGM is being held on 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> June 2015. The AGM business will be dealt with at 9.00am on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2015 and AECB members are invited to attend. The Agenda is set out below and will also be posted on the AECB website with the Annual Report (including the report of the Chairman) and accounts for the period ([www.aecb.net](http://www.aecb.net)).

For full details of this exciting and stimulating conference please visit the home page [www.aecb.net](http://www.aecb.net). If you wish to attend you are encouraged to book as soon as possible as numbers are limited. This year, subject to available places, non-members are welcome to attend. Please note that any AECB member can attend the AGM business session only free of charge.

If you have been or you represent a member company that has been an AECB member for more than 12 months, are you willing to serve as a Trustee of the Association and subsequently sit as a Trustee of the AECB Board? If you are interested please telephone the existing Chairman, Peter Wilkinson, on 01282 844487. He will be able to explain what is involved and the input the AECB needs.

It would also be useful to visit the members' area at [www.aecb.net](http://www.aecb.net) where minutes, reports, trustee and company information is posted. If you have any item you wish to include on the agenda for the meeting under 'any other business' please let Sally (email: [sally@aecb.net](mailto:sally@aecb.net) or tel: 0845 456 9773) have full details by the 29 May 2015. The agenda, annual report, accounts, minutes of the last AGM and other relevant information can be viewed at [www.aecb.net](http://www.aecb.net).

### AGENDA

#### **Annual General Meeting of the Association for Environment Conscious Building (Ltd)(AECB)**

#### **Meeting at 9.00am on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2015**

1. Apologies
2. To receive the minutes of the AGM held on 12th July 2014 (Note: these are available on-line at [www.aecb.net](http://www.aecb.net))
3. To receive the accounts for the financial year ending 30th September 2014. Please note that these are available on-line at [www.aecb.net](http://www.aecb.net))
4. To receive the Trustees' annual report of the AECB's activities to year ending 30th September 2014 (Note: this is available on-line at [www.aecb.net](http://www.aecb.net))
5. In accordance with article 12.5 of the Articles of Association (reproduced below for information), the following will retire from their current positions as Trustees: Paul Bourgeois, Nidhi Shah and Gary Wilburn

*"12.5.1 The term of office for Trustees is 3 years;*

*12.5.2 Excepting Trustees appointed under 12.5.3 all Trustees must retire at the end of their term of office but may offer themselves for re-election. There is no limit to the number of terms of office a Trustee may serve.*

*12.5.3 The Trustees may co-opt up to three Trustees whose term of office is 3 years. The Trustees may co-opt a Trustee for 2 terms of office only."*

6. To elect/re-elect a maximum of 3 trustees to the board (the board consists of a maximum of 12 trustees in total, each standing for a maximum term of office of 3 years). Nominations for Trustees must be sent to the Company Secretary: Peter Wilkinson at the companies registered office: 30 Linden Road, Earby, Barnoldswick, Lancashire, BB18 6XR, no later than 28 days before the AGM.
  1. For information about each candidate please visit [www.aecb.net](http://www.aecb.net)
  7. To appoint Keith Bridgford and Co as auditors.

8. In accordance with paragraph 5.2.1, clauses 4.16, 5.1 and 5.3 of the AECB's articles relating to the maximum to be agreed annually by the AGM, that the limit of earnings that any trustee can claim for work carried out on behalf of the AECB should remain at £5,000.00 in any financial year.
9. To discuss and determine any issues of policy or deal with any other business.

The AECB is a company limited by guarantee. Company No 5336768

Company Secretary: Peter Wilkinson. Registered Office: 30 Linden Road, Earby, Barnoldswick, Lancashire BB18 6XR

## Passive House Planning Package (PHPP) 2013 Version and SketchUp Design plugin: design PH

The English version of the 2013 issue of PHPP (PHPP8) has been released and is available to purchase at £125 plus VAT online from: [www.aecb.net/carbonlite/carbonlite-programme/phpp-software](http://www.aecb.net/carbonlite/carbonlite-programme/phpp-software).

If you already have a copy of an earlier version of PHPP (eg PHPP7) you can upgrade to PHPP8 at the reduced price of £105 plus VAT. This can now be done online at [www.aecb.net/carbonlite/carbonlite-programme/phpp-software](http://www.aecb.net/carbonlite/carbonlite-programme/phpp-software)

The AECB has entered into a contract with the Passivhaus Institute (PHI) to sell the new SketchUp plugin designPH (English version). You can buy it now at the AECB member rate discounted prices online via the AECB website at: [www.aecb.net/carbonlite/carbonlite-programme/phpp-software](http://www.aecb.net/carbonlite/carbonlite-programme/phpp-software)

Prices are listed below. Please note these exclude VAT and depend on the version of PHPP you have. For full details of the new designPH please visit: [www.designph.org/](http://www.designph.org/)

- Upgrade from PHPP7 to PHPP8.5 PLUS designPH plugin: £210
- **NEW** PHPP8 PLUS designPH plugin (includes latest upgrade for PHPP8 to PHPP8.5): £280
- If you have a copy of PHPP8 you can have the designPH plugin only : £170  
(including upgrade to PHPP8.5)

*Please note that if you do not have a copy of PHPP you cannot purchase DesignPH on its own. **The above prices are for AECB members only.***

## Omnisense Remote Monitoring System

The AECB has negotiated an ongoing rate of benefit to members and can offer the Omnisense remote monitoring system at significantly preferential terms to AECB members for projects that would benefit from environmental condition monitoring. The Omnisense system is a web-based remote monitoring system for buildings that measures relative humidity, temperature and moisture level. Currently members who have taken up this offer are monitoring various internal wall insulation constructions, insulated suspended timber floors, conditions within brickwork that has been externally insulated, etc

To obtain a quotation for the Omnisense Remote Monitoring System please contact [gill@aecb.net](mailto:gill@aecb.net). A forum board has been set up for discussion – go to <http://www.aecb.net/forum/index.php/topic,3713.0.html> to read more.

## Welcome To Our New Members

A warm welcome to the following new members who have joined the AECB recently;

|   |                   |
|---|-------------------|
| Stephen Baker   | South Yorkshire   |
| better, Inc.  | USA               |
| Richard Burnett                                       | Scotland          |
| Q-Bot Limited   | London            |
| Nicholas Sharp  | Bristol           |
| Wyvern Building Co                                    | Essex             |
| <a href="#">Sarah Browne Architect</a>                | Monmouthshire     |
| Perchard and Co                                       | Wiltshire         |
| <a href="#">Matildas Planet Manufacturing Limited</a> | Neath Port Talbot |
| Christopher Worboys                                   | Cornwall          |
| Christopher Richards                                  | Cornwall          |

James Walsh  
Daniel Shurrock

Dublin  
Oxfordshire

To ensure you are making the most of your membership, please go to <http://www.aecb.net/membership/manage-profile/membership-benefits/>. In order to have full access to our website, you will need to log in with your username and password. If you need a reminder of these, please email [emma@aecb.net](mailto:emma@aecb.net). If you have joined as a company, you can then enhance your member profile listing on the popular Member Directory at <http://www.aecb.net/services-directory/search/>. Both members and non-members are able to browse or search this directory of products and services provided by our membership.

We are also keen to hear from AECB members wishing to share a news item about themselves or their company to include on the AECB News Platform Member News at <http://www.aecb.net/category/aecb-member-news/>. This could be an award you have recently won for a project, a product or your service. This is strictly an area for promoting AECB member news only and we will therefore not be able to publish any items which AECB considers to be purely advertising of products or services. Please send your short item (max 200 words) plus a link to your website and one picture, to AECB Business Operations Manager, Gill Rivers at [gill@aecb.net](mailto:gill@aecb.net).

### Green Open Homes Grants, Autumn 2015

To stimulate new Green Open Homes events and boost the ambition of existing ones, the Department of Energy and Climate Change has a grant fund to help cover the costs of organising events which Green Open Homes are administering. Organisers of open homes events can now apply for grants of up to £7,500 for events taking place in September and October of this year. The deadline for applications is **15 June 2015**. Supported events will be expected to feature a minimum of eight homes.

Go to [http://www.greenopenhomes.net/downloads/file/GreenOpenHomes\\_grant\\_app\\_AUTUMN\\_2015.doc](http://www.greenopenhomes.net/downloads/file/GreenOpenHomes_grant_app_AUTUMN_2015.doc) to download the application form. The new, simpler, application form has more focus on project plans and budgets to help organisers demonstrate clearly what they want to achieve with the grant.

A mentor group of experienced organisers will be established to offer help and support to newer groups. And look out for our summer networking event for organisers, home openers and volunteers; time and place TBC. Sign up the Centre for Sustainable Energy's communities update newsletter at [http://www.cse.org.uk/projects/view/1262#Newsletter\\_Community\\_Energy\\_Update](http://www.cse.org.uk/projects/view/1262#Newsletter_Community_Energy_Update) or follow [@CSE\\_communities](https://twitter.com/CSE_communities) to stay in touch.

And if you want to speak to someone about setting up a Green Open Homes event, email us at [communities@cse.org.uk](mailto:communities@cse.org.uk) or give us a call on **0117 934 1400** (this is the switchboard at the Centre for Sustainable Energy, so you'll need to ask to speak to someone about Green Open Homes).

### Interact With Us On Twitter, Facebook And Through 'Member News'.

We would love our members to get involved with us on Twitter (<https://twitter.com/AECBnet/status/591605426107637760>) and Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Association-for-Environment-Conscious-Building/1488186938072196>) by letting us know why you joined, how we have helped you and keeping us up to date with any projects you are involved with. Please 'like' and 'follow' us to keep up to date with our news and events.

Members can also share news about themselves or their company in our 'Member News' area (<http://www.aecb.net/category/aecb-member-news/>) and in this Newsletter. This could be a press release or an award you have recently won for a project, a product or your service, for example. If you are a Supporting Individual, this may be details about a project you are starting or even the finished project! This is strictly an area for promoting AECB member news only and we will therefore not be able to publish any items which AECB considers to be purely advertising. Please send your short item (max 200 words) plus a link to your website and one picture, to AECB Business Operations Manager, Gill Rivers – [gill@aecb.net](mailto:gill@aecb.net).

### AECB CarbonLite Passivhaus Designer course in Hereford, September

Our next course is coming up on the 7<sup>th</sup> September 2015. Architype, an inspiring architectural Practice, will host our September course at their restored and sustainable office in Hereford. Secure your place now with 10% deposit & get the early bird rate! The full course for £2000+VAT\*. Contact Ingrid Bravo on 01752452546 or email [training@peterwarm.co.uk](mailto:training@peterwarm.co.uk)

Passivhaus and Low Energy Building Design is rapidly becoming an essential skill for Architects, Consultants and Self-builders. Our course will give you the confidence to tackle UK low energy projects along with more specific guidance on achieving the standard of air tightness and thermal bridge free construction required by the Passivhaus standard. Our course is delivered by highly experienced UK professionals and leads to international accreditation as a Certified Passivhaus Designer or Consultant.

Why AECB Carbonlite? [www.aecb.net/carbonlite/carbonlite-programme/training-courses/](http://www.aecb.net/carbonlite/carbonlite-programme/training-courses/)

- Obtain an international accreditation as a **Certified Passivhaus Designer or Consultant**.
- Our Course is the only one developed specifically for the UK and uses **UK building examples**, rather than the European CEPH material taught by others.
- This course is written and taught by leaders in UK Passivhaus development, They are the experts who are actually successfully designing/ building Passivhaus in UK: amongst others, **Bill Butcher, Alan Clarke, Sally Godber, Nick Grant, Eric Parks, Marine Sanchez, Mark Siddall, Will South, Peter Warm** and the WARM staff who have supported over 200 buildings in low energy design as well as being Passivhaus certifiers.

|          | HEREFORD                                | LONDON B                               |
|----------|---|--|
| Week 1   | 7 <sup>th</sup> – 11 <sup>th</sup> Sept | 2 <sup>nd</sup> – 6 <sup>th</sup> Nov  |
| Week 2   | 21 <sup>st</sup> -25 <sup>th</sup> Sept | 16 <sup>th</sup> -20 <sup>th</sup> Nov |
| PHI Exam | 10 <sup>th</sup> Oct                    | 4 <sup>th</sup> Dec                    |

*\*Additional modules are not included in the full CEPH course price.*

Find out more at <http://www.aecb.net/carbonlite/carbonlite-programme/training-courses/>

## Online Therm course

How bad are your thermal bridges? Thermal bridges are one of the key ways that buildings lose much more heat than expected. Understanding them is critical to designing low energy buildings. Learn how to use the (free) software “THERM” with the experts from the AECB CarbonLite team. The new online Therm course allows people to learn at their own speed and in their own time.

Watch our 2 min promotional video here: [www.carbonlitetraining.co.uk](http://www.carbonlitetraining.co.uk)

To sample the course you can log in as a guest and use the set up instructions “Setting up THERM for Use in Thermal Bridge Calculations” that will guide you step by step to install Therm on your computer. The initial set up of Therm can be a bit tricky and as part of the course we offer assistance if you get stuck.

The on-line course cost is £200+VAT for one year’s access to the Moodle course and a nominal 2 hours support by email. Contact [training@peterwarm.co.uk](mailto:training@peterwarm.co.uk) for more details.

## AECB Member News

### INNO-THERM Shortlisted For Award



Recovery Insulation’s recycled cotton/denim INNO-THERM has been shortlisted to the final in the “London Sustainability Award” category. The Winners and Runners Up will be announced during the awards gala dinner ceremony on the evening of the 18th June 2015 at the exclusive venue, Indigo at the O2.

“One way to meet the global challenges and help in the transition to a low carbon economy is to provide environmentally friendly sustainable insulation materials while ensuring adequate ventilation and good air quality, critical components for

healthy and low carbon buildings. UK research has shown a correlation between poorly conceived energy efficiency efforts, indoor air quality and the rise in asthma and allergic diseases in UK.

If you are looking to increase building fabric thermal efficiency while keeping to budget; and have a client that requires a low impact environment for a building, using INNO-THERM in the design phase of construction can be a cost-effect way to decrease heating and cooling bills as well as having no ongoing maintenance and renewal costs.”

*Abstract from paper by David Garlovsky (Inno-Therm)*

For more go to <http://www.inno-therm.com/>

## AECB Member Offers

### Centre of Refurbishment Excellence (CoRE) – Masterclasses on domestic retrofit

CoRE is the not for profit, national centre of excellence for green building retrofit. Our mission is to transfer practical retrofit knowledge to support excellence in retrofit projects across the domestic and non-domestic sectors. CoRE’s network of Fellows is the UK’s largest bank of retrofit expertise, drawing together leading practitioners from construction, design and academia. They not only shape the CoRE agenda, but also share their knowledge with the growing number of active retrofitters through events, bespoke training and information sharing. Based in Stoke-on-Trent, CoRE is itself an example of refurbishment excellence, an international standard conference and training venue.

We have pioneered dozens of new courses on domestic retrofit, all designed and delivered by leading experts (our CoRE Fellows). We offer these as CoRE Diploma Programmes, currently available for Retrofit Coordinators and Retrofit Asset Management. For more information please see [www.core-skills.com/training/](http://www.core-skills.com/training/)

CoRE Masterclasses usually cost £200+VAT but AECB members will only be charged £100+VAT subject to the completion of appropriate paperwork to obtain Government subsidy.

If for any reason AECB members are not eligible for the subsidised funding CoRE will be happy to honour a discounted price of £125+VAT. Please contact Gill Rivers by email [gill@aecb.net](mailto:gill@aecb.net) to obtain the promotion code.

### Need phone and broadband at home? Make it greener



By choosing The Co-operative Phone and Broadband, you are supporting an organisation that is committed to minimising its impact on the environment while still offering the best possible service to its customers.

The Co-operative Phone and Broadband is provided by The Phone Co-op, an independent consumer co-operative which:

- Invests in solar photovoltaic installations – over the last 18 months, it’s put £622k into solar energy generation, saving 140 tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions per year
- Supports community energy – in 2013, it put £45k into renewable energy projects
- Offsets its carbon footprint by paying a levy on the CO2 emissions resulting from its activity
- Promotes the use of more sustainable transport modes – 91% of business miles travelled in 2013 were by train, bus, bike or on foot
- Uses electricity from renewable sources
- Recycles 100% of its waste

The Co-operative Phone and Broadband offers everything you need to stay connected; including mobile services.

**Members of AECB get a £10 credit on their first bill; 6% of their spend goes back to supporting AECB's work - just quote unique code AF0130 when switching. Find out more on <http://www.thephone.coop/aecb>.**

To switch today (or to register your interest if you are stuck in a contract with a different provider), call 01608 434 040 or click here: <http://www.thephone.coop/home/schedule-reminder/>

## Building with Straw Bales

### Revised and updated full-colour edition of bestselling practical book

Published 29<sup>th</sup> May 2015, but available for pre-order from the 16<sup>th</sup> May.

With the first straw bale houses to be offered on the open market having gone on sale recently, straw bale building is an eco-friendly building technique that is finally entering the mainstream, enabling people to design and build their own home in a low-cost and environmentally friendly way.

*Building with Straw Bales: A practical manual for self-builders and architects* is the revised and extended 3rd edition of Barbara Jones', in full-colour for the first time, with stunning photos that provide inspiration as well as practical details.

**Barbara Jones** is recognised as one of the world's experts on building with straw bales, with her hands-on training courses proving popular to people from all walks of life. Throughout her career she has been a strong advocate for women in the construction industry and she was awarded a Lifetime Achievement Award from Women in Construction in 2011 and received a Woman of Outstanding Achievement Award from UK Resource Centre (UKRC) in 2009. In 2014 she founded the School of Natural Building (SNaB), whose aim is not only to promote natural building as a sustainable and affordable method, but also to encourage more women to become involved in construction. The previous two editions of *Building with Straw Bales* have sold over 13,000 copies since 2002.

**Price:** £29.99 paperback, £39.99 hardcover

**Discount to AECB members 30% (hardback and paperback editions)**

**Dates valid: 16<sup>th</sup> May 2015 to 30st June 2015**

Go to [www.greenbooks.co.uk/bwsb](http://www.greenbooks.co.uk/bwsb)

To redeem this discount: simply enter your voucher code AECBMAY15 at checkout.

## Local Group News

For full details of the events listed below and forthcoming events please visit [www.aecb.net/events/](http://www.aecb.net/events/) for up to date information on all of these events including dates, times and venues or email [debbie@aecb.net](mailto:debbie@aecb.net) to request that your name be added to a Local Group mailing list.

### Forthcoming Local Group Events in May 2015:

- **Nottingham Open Homes Weekend: 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2015**



Low energy homes in Nottingham and the surrounding area open their doors to visitors on 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2015.

This year we have more Open Homes than ever before - currently expecting 11 but more are welcome!

As ever, the homes are diverse: a zero carbon barn conversion, 2 "close to EnerPHit" refurb, several Superhomes, 3 which have used recent government grants to help with the cost of external wall insulation...

Another interesting statistic - at least 5 of these Open Homes were visitors at previous Open Homes events run by Transition West Bridgford. It is great to see the ripple effect in action!

It's all about sharing experiences of the pros and cons of installing energy saving measures and renewable technologies – direct from the householders themselves, and sometimes from the architects or other specialists involved.

All visits are free - for more details go to [www.wbecohouses.co.uk](http://www.wbecohouses.co.uk) or email [wbecohouses@gmail.com](mailto:wbecohouses@gmail.com).

- **3 Counties Local Group [Gloucestershire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire]**

Julia Bennett has had to resign her position as Local Group Co-ordinator to give her more time to concentrate on her family and her new job at Encraft - good Luck with that Julia. However, she hopes to continue as an active Local Group member. Ruth Busbridge and Neill Lewis are sharing the Group co-ordination role and have arranged the next Group meeting for May.

#### May meeting

This will be a visit to Deb Turnbull's house. Deb has often talked about her project at Local Group meetings and now she is giving us an opportunity to see it at first hand. The project is a deep retrofit towards Enerphit standard. A work very much in progress, including a SIP extension with timber cladding, triple glazing, a loft conversion, hemp-lime, cork and expanded glass insulations.

Nibbles and soft drinks will be provided, for which we ask a modest donation.

Date and time: Thursday 14th May 2015, starting at 6.30pm.

Address: Old Court Lodge, Broadwood Drive, Colwall WR13 6QD

#### Parking:

There is no parking on the site, please park on the main Walwyn Road and walk along Broadwood Drive. Deb's house is the first on the right [the one with the new timber-clad extension].

#### Contact

If you need to contact one of us on the night - Neill's mobile number is 07986 355 822

***Note that this is a construction site; please wear suitable clothing including sturdy shoes.***

We hope to take the opportunity during the evening to discuss possible events for the coming year. If you have any ideas such as visiting speakers, projects in progress, subjects for discussion etc, please send them Neill [[neill.lewis@aecb.net](mailto:neill.lewis@aecb.net)] before the meeting, with as much detail as you can, to help us put together a lively and informative programme.

If you want to come along, please email Neill at [neill.lewis@aecb.net](mailto:neill.lewis@aecb.net).

- **Milton Keynes Local Group: Passivhaus Standards – Talk at Bletchley Park 19th May 2015**

Following the recent International Passive House Conference, the Milton Keynes Local Group will be revisiting the Passivhaus standards with a talk chaired by Patrick and Alan at Bletchley Park on 19th May at 8.00pm.

If you would like to attend please let Alan know or email [donna@ecodesignconsultants.co.uk](mailto:donna@ecodesignconsultants.co.uk)

- **Brighton Local Group**

Jim Miller and Tim Small of the of the Brighton Group hold regular meetings that provide an informal opportunity for individuals to discuss sustainable building practices and techniques – concentrating on the technical issues. It also provides a forum for commercial networking and socialising.

Time and Date: **Every second Tuesday** of the month, from 7.00 pm until about 10.30

Venue: **The Battle of Trafalgar**, 34 Guildford Road, Brighton BN1 3LW (just up the hill from Brighton Station)

The evening is likely to be useful for architects, building contractors, and associated trades, people looking to have sustainable building works carried out (new build or renovation). However, all are welcome, including skilled self-builders and DIYers.

Full details of all Local Group events can be found at [www.aecb.net/events/](http://www.aecb.net/events/)

## News

### Green energy jobs grow 7 times faster than national average

Employment in renewable energy increased by 9% across all sectors last year, with biomass heating emerging as the best-performing sector in terms of recruitment. The Renewable Energy Association (REA) has released its annual regional and national jobs analysis, revealing significant growth in the UK's green energy labour market. The total number working in the renewables industry has risen to more than 112,000, outstripping growth in market values in many other sectors.

London continues to be the leading area for renewable employment, with 21,034 people currently in post. This is followed by the South East England region (14,767), and the North West (10,693). Wind power continues to lead the renewables pack when it comes to recruitment, with offshore and onshore wind employing more than 37,000 people last year - an increase on 6.5%. The highest performing sector this year was in biomass, with employment increased by an average of nearly a fifth (19%) across the UK.

Despite the figures confirming a significant boost in renewable energy employment over the past year, the REA warns that the industry must not become complacent, as the outcome of next week's General Election and any potential consequences it may have on the renewable energy sector remains very uncertain. Labour and the Lib Dems pledged to grow the number of green jobs in their manifestos, but the Conservatives made no such promises.

Full details of the REA report will be launched in the second Annual REA Review Report next week, which will also cover deployment and investment figures and analysis. Late last year, a separate report from the UK Energy Research Centre discovered that investment in renewables and energy efficiency can create up to 10 times as many jobs per unit of electricity as investment in fossil fuels.

Full story at <http://www.edie.net/news/6/Green-energy-jobs-grow-7-times-faster-than-national-average/>

## **London leads charge towards sustainable megacities**

London is the only 'megacity' in the world where electricity use per capita is going down while GDP is going up, according to a new University of Toronto study. The UK capital's success can be attributed to rising electricity prices, according to the report, as a result of the country's decarbonisation policies. The city also has effective taxes on waste disposal and a comprehensive public transport system.

London was recently ranked as the world's second most sustainable city by the Arcadis Sustainable Cities Index. That ranking was reinforced by this new study, which examined the 'metabolism of megacities' - i.e. the amount of resources consumed and waste produced by urban areas larger than 10m people. But London was the exception rather than the rule, as the world's megacities are home to 6.7% of the world's population, yet they consume 9.3% of global electricity and produce 12.6% of global waste.

As these huge cities spread into the suburbs, they tend to lose the energy and transport efficiencies usually associated with urban dwelling. According to lead researcher Chris Kennedy, some cities are guiltier than others. Tokyo's efficient design and vast network of public transit reduces its environmental impact, and demonstrates that in some cases, smart urban policies can reduce resource use, even in the face of rising GDP and exploding populations. Tokyo has also aggressively addressed leaky pipes, a strategy that has reduced water losses to 3%. This compares to over 50% in cities like Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paolo.

Full story at <http://www.edie.net/news/5/London-leads-charge-towards-sustainable-megacities/>

## **Measure UK prosperity in natural capital, say IEMA members**

A measure of natural capital should be used alongside GDP to measure the overall 'prosperity' of the UK, according to 92% of sustainability professionals. The Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment (IEMA) polled 560 of its members, revealing overwhelming support for change in the way the UK economy is measured. More than nine out of 10 wanted to see 'natural capital' or 'wellbeing' measured alongside GDP.

The poll - the fifth and final one from IEMA in the run-up to the election - found that sustainability professionals also want to see a broad change in the way their industry is treated in Westminster. As many as 93% of respondents want sustainability to be put above party politics, similar to the way the NHS could be treated, according to IEMA. Without this cohesive approach, professionals have been left frustrated and disappointed by the lack of prominence that important issues have been given in the campaign. Earlier polls revealed that just 22% of IEMA members support the leaders of the three main parties.

IEMA Members feel that critical long-term sustainability issues have been too low on the agenda, or completely missing from debate. 68% said risks from the changing climate have been missing, 55% say resource threats should have had greater prominence and 49% feel that renewable energy needed more discussion.

Despite the criticism, both Labour and the Liberal Democrats have released stand-alone green manifestos, with the Lib Dems in particular making bold commitments on renewable energy and decarbonisation.

Full story at <http://www.edie.net/news/5/Measure-UK-prosperity-in-natural-capital-say-IEMA-members/28165/>

## **Leonardo DiCaprio to build world's greenest island resort**

Leonardo DiCaprio has announced plans to create "the world's most sustainable island resort" which will push the boundaries of green design, architecture and eco-tourism. The Hollywood actor and environmental activist is working with Restorative Hospitality, a subsidiary of ethical real estate firm Delos, to develop a 104-acre 'restorative island' at Blackadore Caye in Belize.

Upon its completion in 2018, the island will feature 68 villas, 48 estate homes, three restaurants, a spa and a private clubhouse - all incorporating sustainable building techniques that will restore and regenerate the surrounding ecosystem and reverse the effects of climate change.

The Blackadore Caye resort will be 'Triple Net Zero' (energy, waste and waste) and free of toxic chemicals. Its design will restore and reinforce the area by replanting mangrove, replacing invasive species with native species, enhancing soil and habitat and creating additional armature for reef and fish breeding. Additionally, over half of the island has been set aside as a protected wildlife preserve. The island's infrastructure has been designed under a unique conservation framework, developed by top biologists and ecologists who have studied ways to support and preserve the island's habitat and biodiversity during construction. All buildings will meet the standards of the Living Building Challenge - one of the world's most stringent and progressive green building certifications.

Hollywood actor DiCaprio has long been a committed environmentalist. The United Nations secretary general Ban ki Moon last year said the actor's global stardom was the perfect match for the global challenge posed by climate change. As such, DiCaprio was appointed as a UN representative on climate change, with his first duty to address the opening of the climate summit last September in New York.

Full story at <http://www.edie.net/news/4/Leonardo-DiCaprio-Blackadore-Caye-worlds-greenest-island/>

### **Green investment specialists unite for social housing solar scheme**

Ecology Building Society has invested £250,000 into crowdfunding site Abundance as part of a new partnership to extend support for UK renewable energy projects. Ecology has selected the Oakapple Berwickshire solar project for its first investment; with 749 roof-mounted solar panels set to provide 2595kW of electricity to homes in the local area.

Ecology's investment in this project will produce an effective rate of return of 7.5%, paid twice yearly to investors as cash payments over the 20-year term of the solar project. Ecology Building Society will invest on equal terms alongside the individual Abundance investors who invest from just £5 in each project.

Meanwhile, Berwickshire Housing Association tenants living in the homes on which the solar panels are installed will enjoy a substantial drop in their energy bills - up to as much as a Oakapple Berwickshire to more than £1.5 million, well past the minimum raise of £500,000. The target total raise remains £3.1 million 30% reduction - without having to pay anything towards the project.

Abundance co-founder and joint managing director Bruce Davis said Oakapple Berwickshire is a perfect example of the Abundance mission in action; offering a low risk investment that pays an attractive return to investors, but also has wider positive outcomes.

Today's announcement takes the total investment in the Oakapple Berwickshire solar project to more than £1.5m - well past the minimum raise of £500,000. The target total remains at £3.1m, which would make it Europe's largest crowd-funded solar project to date.

Since launch, Abundance has raised more than £9.5 million of investment into its ethical projects.

Full story at <http://www.edie.net/news/6/Green-investment-specialists-unite-for-social-housing-solar-project/>

### **EU agrees to burst biofuels bubble after 2020**

After more than 10 years of debate, the European Parliament has today (28 April) agreed new laws to limit the use of crop-based biofuels across the continent. The new rules effectively limit the use of biofuels in the transport sector at 7%, which count towards the 10% renewable energy target in transport by 2020. The decision will prevent up to 320 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> - equal to Poland's total carbon emissions in 2012 - from entering the atmosphere. It has dually been welcomed by green groups and industry bodies alike.

Under the reform agreed today, oil companies and the European Commission will also need to report the full environmental impact of biofuels, including indirect land use change (ILUC) emissions. The ruling has proved controversial, with sustainable-transport lobby group Transport and Environment (T&E), Oxfam and the Green Party all agreeing that the 7% limit is still too high. After years of discussion, however, the compromise that was endorsed by the European Parliament lacks concrete and harmonized measures.

Full story at <http://www.edie.net/news/6/EU-crop-based-biofuels-transport-limit-2020/>

### **Majority of UK consumers would install rooftop solar, survey finds**

As many as 60% of UK consumers would consider installing solar panels for the first time in the next five years. A new survey, released today by market research firm Mintel, revealed a widespread optimism about the uptake of domestic rooftop solar, with just 40% saying they would not even consider them, and roughly a third of these people ruled themselves out because they thought their roof would be unsuitable, with concern about maintenance costs (29%) and potential for relocation (24%) the other main issues.

Only 15% of people are concerned about how solar panels would affect the price of their house, suggesting that this is only a small deterrent, while less than one in ten (8%) said they do not spend enough time in their home during daylight hours to benefit from the daytime electricity generated by these solar panels. The majority of people (55%) have heard of the government's 'Feed-in Tariff' (FIT) scheme; 50% have heard of 'rent-a-roof' schemes, with slightly more people (54%) are aware of the 'Green Deal' finance scheme.

There is also a wealth of growth potential for commercial rooftop solar. Panels on just 61% of the nation's 2.500km<sup>2</sup> south-facing commercial roof space would meet the total electricity demand of UK companies.

Full story at <http://www.edie.net/news/6/Majority-of-UK-consumers-would-install-rooftop-solar/>

## Vacancies

### The post of Course Director for Architecture at CAT, Machynlleth is open to applicants.



#### A NEW DIRECTION

The Graduate School of the Environment (GSE) at CAT seeks to recruit an inspiring, enthusiastic, capable and versatile individual as a Course Director in Architecture. The right person for this position will lead the architectural teaching, focussed on a profound sensibility towards our place on this planet, bringing professional and academic experience to the role.

This is a new opportunity to remould and revalidate this distinctive Part II programme with an emphasis on environmental 'adaptation' to far reaching climate shifts. The re-validated course might explore architectural aspects of a new economic paradigm including de-centralized food and energy production, reconfigured rural and market-town settlements, and radically re-thought cities. This dynamic and creative School is based at the Centre for Alternative Technology (CAT) in the award-winning low carbon WISE building by David Lea and Pat Borer.

The successful applicant will contribute significantly to the further development of our unique identity and agenda for architectural education. We are the only Part II Course that is ARB recognised but not under the five-year visit regime of RIBA and we are the only one that runs an 18-month straight- through course as opposed to two years.

The Graduate School's multidisciplinary teaching context includes architecture, low carbon material innovation, sustainability, adaptation to environmental change including climate change, and renewable energy technologies. CAT has pioneered in this field for 40 years.

Our studio-based programme addresses the critical and creative role of architecture in relation to broad environmental, physical, economic, political and social contexts. We focus on remodelling what exists as well as new-build. There is a bias towards 'live' projects or at least those where architecture can help to empower current communities by way of participation. Physical hands-on fabrication and testing of low-impact materials and green construction methods are part of our educational processes.

Unlike many Part IIs which are lecture-light, the studio work at CAT is supported by architectural context studies in the areas of history, philosophy, technology and social agendas. Building and technical studies benefit from input from external experts in practice, and from drawing on CAT's *Zero Carbon Britain* agenda (<http://zerocarbonbritain.org/>) plus the engineering expertise attached to other courses in the GSE.

The programme runs at CAT for a period of 18 months as a series of intense fixed teaching sessions, each lasting five and a half residential days per month, in order to complete the necessary credits for the Part II qualification. In between these week-long sessions, with key staff resident on site throughout the week, communication between students and tutors is through 'skype' and all other forms of digital communication.

Students benefit from CAT's 40-years' experience in the field of sustainable architecture and building, renewable energy and global environmental issues. CAT provides a unique tranquil rural environment for study, with access to leading academics and industry practitioners in relevant fields, a lively and immersive week of learning and interaction with students from many disciplines, and a mix of renewable energy technologies and low-impact buildings in use and on display.

This is an opportunity to shape the future of architectural educational provision at one of the key founding institutions of the green movement at this most exciting 'tipping point' for architecture.

To make an informal enquiry about the roles please email [head.education@cat.org.uk](mailto:head.education@cat.org.uk)

## Publications

### Building with Straw Bales

#### **Revised and updated full-colour edition of bestselling practical book**

*Published 29th May 2015, but available for pre-order from the 16th May.*

With the first straw bale houses to be offered on the open market having gone on sale recently, straw bale building is an eco-friendly building technique that is finally entering the mainstream, enabling people to design and build their own home in a low-cost and environmentally friendly way.

*Building with Straw Bales: A practical manual for self-builders and architects* is the revised and extended 3rd edition of Barbara Jones', in full-colour for the first time, with stunning photos that provide inspiration as well as practical details.

**Barbara Jones** is recognised as one of the world's experts on building with straw bales, with her hands-on training courses proving popular to people from all walks of life. Throughout her career she has been a strong advocate for women in the construction industry and she was awarded a Lifetime Achievement Award from Women in Construction in 2011 and received a Woman of Outstanding Achievement Award from UK Resource Centre (UKRC) in 2009. In 2014 she founded the School of Natural Building (SNaB), whose aim is not only to promote natural building as a sustainable and affordable method, but also to encourage more women to become involved in construction. The previous two editions of *Building with Straw Bales* have sold over 13,000 copies since 2002.

**Price: £29.99 paperback, £39.99 hardcover**

**Discount to AECB members 30% (hardback and paperback editions)**

**Dates valid: 16th May 2015 to 30st June 2015**

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### New From IHS BRE Press

- **Building information modelling life cycle assessment (IP 5/15)**

Daniel Doran

ISBN 978-1-84806-419-5

The adoption of BIM by the construction industry signals readiness for the integration of building-level LCA in design. BRE has responded through the recognition of IMPACT-compliant tools (and equivalent) in BREEAM schemes. This Information Paper begins by introducing embodied impacts and how they are measured using LCA. This is followed by a review of the key themes and advantages of building-level LCA, integration in BIM and BREEAM.

For more go to <http://www.brebookshop.com/details.jsp?id=327532>

*If you have any news, events or courses you would like to publicise in Network then please email details to [network@aecb.net](mailto:network@aecb.net).*