

**[THE] ASSOCIATION FOR ENVIRONMENT CONSCIOUS BUILDING  
COMPANY NO 5336768**

**ANNUAL REPORT**

**COVERING THE PERIOD 1<sup>ST</sup> JANUARY TO 31<sup>ST</sup> DECEMBER 2017**

**AECB PROGRESS AND ACTIVITIES**

**Patrons**

We were pleased to finalise our Patron package towards the end of the year and invite larger companies who would like to work more closely with us to consider the package which can be found [here](#).

**CarbonLite retrofit training course (CLR)**

Students continue to study and give excellent feedback on our [CarbonLite retrofit course](#) which is accessed online and as at 31<sup>st</sup> December we had 43 graduates who have passed. [A new area of our website](#) is now in place to feature our graduates and they are also searchable in our [Members Directory](#).

At the beginning of the year, the Passivhaus Institute agreed that CarbonLite retrofit graduates were entitled to 35 credit points on successful completion of the course towards renewal of their Passivhaus Designer/Consultant qualification.

Taking into account feedback from students, the course has naturally evolved and at the end of the year, we announced some changes - mainly that students can start the course at any time without the need to be in a cohort and also that the associated webinars from 2018 will be sold separately to the course. The webinars becoming optional gives more flexibility so students can join at any time and pass the course when they have completed the quizzes.

**Realcosting**

Retrofit Economics Analysis and Lifetime costing, 'REALcosting' training is run on behalf of the AECB by Tim Martel, it's specifically for retrofits only. About a dozen AECB members have taken advantage of this since its launch in January 17. The AECB receives a flat rate percentage and 30% of the initial development costs have been covered. It seems that it may take longer than the initial estimate of 2 years before these are paid off and the AECB can move to the higher rate. There should be some more interest after Tim speaks at the Passivhaus Institute annual conference in Munich in March.

## **Silver Standard (now re-named to the AECB Building Standard)**

After much thought, the AECB Board decided to rename the Silver standard to the [AECB Building Standard](#) to make it clearer.

Six building projects were certified to the AECB's Silver standard during this period. Members can download the standards free of charge and certificates are awarded for those projects that meet the standards when the details have been uploaded on to the [Low Energy Buildings Database](#) (The AECB has been monitoring 5 sites for the CLR course and this service was extended for AECB members in June 2016. Articles about the AECB Building Standard appeared in the Passive House Plus magazine and also in Period Living magazine during 2017.

## **CarbonLite Courses**

[These popular, well attended courses](#) continue to be run on behalf of the AECB by Warm . The Certified Passivhaus Designer training course guides delegates through various modules to achieve certified Passivhaus Designer or Consultant status, thereby giving delegates the confidence to tackle UK Passivhaus Projects. The online Thermal Bridging Course is also available. The AECB receives a flat rate percentage of course income received.

## **Passive House + Magazine**

AECB members continue to receive this magazine as part of their membership as it is our official partner magazine. Published bi-monthly, two pages were allocated to the AECB during 2017 where we continue to spread the word about what we do and the benefits of being a member. Articles have included subjects such as the AECB Building Standard and the CarbonLite retrofit course

## **AECB Website Redevelopment**

Re development work took place behind the scenes to improve our membership database. This is not visible on our website but the work was an overhaul of numerous fixes to make our database more robust and to offer more opportunities to us in the future. Also included was an improvement to the [forum](#) to make it visible as part of the AECB site. The forum continues to be an integral part of our website which google analytics shows is searched regularly even though posting on the forum has dropped.

At the end of the year, work was being finalised on a new [community area](#) in order to feature some of our members who may not be easily searchable in the Member Directory. This will go live at the beginning of 2018.

## Evidence to Select Committees and responses

The AECB has submitted the following evidence to Parliament during this report period;

Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Committee – Heat in Buildings and A Smart, Flexible Energy System.

Evidence can be viewed [here](#) .

In February the AECB combined forces with the Passivhaus Trust, National Energy Foundation, Sustainable Development Foundation, Sustainable Traditional Buildings Alliance and the Retrofit Academy to respond to the Each Home Counts report. Our collaborate response is [here](#).

Prior to the General Election, we invited guest blogger Mike Hannis to interpret each party's stance on building, energy and climate policy. These blogs proved very popular.

## Social media

We continue to build up our presence on Social Media with nearly 5500 followers on Twitter and nearly 400 facebook followers.

## AECB Board

The Board of Directors of the AECB met to conduct routine business four times during the period. The minutes of each meeting are published on the website [here](#).

## Staffing

We were pleased to welcome Katie Hammonds at the beginning of the year for her placement experience. She helped with our new Community area and also worked alongside Stacey Waring to bring her in as an independent expert to work with us. Stacey is currently working on the issue created by breathable roof membranes being used in roofs where bats roost and is looking to find a industry-standard testing method for such materials. Stacey will be working alongside us during 2018 so more information will be provided in the next report.

James Allen joined us in November as our new Communication and Development Manager. He spent his first few months finalising our [Patron membership package](#) and producing a new [leaflet for prospective members](#). He also started getting the AECB message out to the wider world.

## New office in Hereford

We took on a temporary office in Hereford during the year at the Castle Green Pavillion in Hereford - <http://www.friendsofcastlegreen.org.uk/pavilion/>, This was useful for face to face meetings with our new staff

and we also held the final Board meeting of the year there.

## **Finance**

There was a significant deficit for this financial year. This was due to various reasons.

Membership income continued to be the main source of AECB income. Membership levels continued to decline. New membership levels were lower than previous periods and the membership averaged 1100.

The AECB makes a surplus from the sale of the Passivhaus Planning Package (PHPP) and DesignPH software and sales were good. The AECB is contracted to sell both PHPP and the DesignPH software by the Passivhaus Institute and is now the sole supplier of these products in the UK. There are discounts available for existing users, bulk supplies and educational institutions.

The accounts are published separately and are in the members' area of the website at <http://www.aecb.net>.

## **Conference**

Our conference this year was held in London at the headquarters of the institute of Engineering and Technology. The theme was 'Raising the quality and quantity of housing' and provided members and non members with excellent talks and networking opportunities.

At the end of the year arrangements were already in hand for a [Convention](#) in 2018 in Hereford.

## **AGM**

This year we trialled our AGM online which was successful and allowed members to contribute remotely.

## **Online open webinars**

Due to the success of the online AGM, we held an open webinar discussion with members towards the end of the year. Questions were posed on our forum and were then discussed between members and our CEO. Feedback was positive and we will be continuing with these during 2018 on a 'themed' basis which was felt would be more beneficial to members.

## Membership and local groups

We continued to gain new memberships over 2017 and gave these new members the chance to introduce themselves in our newsletter. We have also been making efforts to ensure members are aware of all our benefits including letting us have articles for our [Member News area](#) and [Soapbox](#).

The AECB has a network of Local Groups, mainly in the south of the country, providing members and non-members with an opportunity to meet up. Members have had opportunities to visit low energy builds, retrofits and have also benefitted from training, hands- on practical sessions and discussion through these groups.

## Caplor Horizons

Staff and Board have been working with [Caplor Horizons](#) to facilitate an organisational effectiveness programme to contribute towards our efforts in leading the conversation about sustainable building and be a focal point for action to raise standards.

## Board members and staff

### Trustees (Directors)

Julia Bennett  
Frances Bradshaw  
Chris Herring  
Mischa Hewitt  
Paul Jennings  
Philip Newbold (retired from Board agm 17)  
Nidhi Shah  
Mark Siddall  
Gary Wilburn  
Peter Wilkinson  
Peter Wilshaw

### Positions

Chair: Peter Wilkinson  
Vice-Chair: Frances Bradshaw  
Secretary to the Trustees: Mark Siddall  
Treasurer: Paul Jennings  
Company Secretary: Peter Wilkinson

## **Staff**

Chief Executive Officer: Andy Simmonds

Finance and Legal Manager: Sally Hall

Communications and Development Manager: James Allen

Membership Administrator and Website Sub Editor : Emma Furniss

CLR Co-ordinator: Tina Holt

Auditors: Keith Bridgford & Co Limited

Building Society: Ecology Building Society

Bankers: The Co-operative Bank