

Sustainable Homes

Do you need ESP?

Sustainable Homes launches its EcoHomes Support Programme in June, to kickstart the process of building to EcoHomes 'Very Good' and help associations do it cost-effectively.

Under new requirements, all Housing Corporation-funded developments will have to comply with this higher environmental standard from April next year.

Our programme will deal with the following areas:

Cost: New research into how much it costs to make the grade, for all types of location;

Free action learning events: Bringing expertise and experience to the sector. The

Regional event dates:

- | | |
|----------------|------------|
| • 30 June | Leeds |
| • 5 July | Birmingham |
| • 12 July | London |
| • 20 September | London |
| • 28 September | Bristol |
| • 6 October | London |
| • 12 October | Liverpool |

EcoHomes Support Programme

day will consist of an overview and two workshops from expert practitioners – see below for dates and locations;

Guidance: A post-course printed guide on learnings, case studies and contacts;

Support: Sustainable Homes is available for advice and support on all aspects of meeting the new standard, including funding, rural issues, signposting other resources and practitioners.

The Housing Corporation, who are funding this initiative, recognise the challenge ahead for associations. Chief Executive Jon Rouse, who will launch the programme at a Masterclass in June, says "we are demanding a big step-up from housing providers and we hope these events will provide some valuable assistance".

If you are interested in attending these classes, please contact info@sustainablehomes.co.uk or telephone 020 8973 0429.



• Congratulations to Ujima Housing Association on achieving ISO 14001 accreditation.



Sustainable Homes is supported by an Innovation and Good Practice Grant from the Housing Corporation



Home is where the heat is

Drum Housing Association opened their latest eco-jewel in April: two new homes boasting the innovative Sunergy roofing system. From left to right: Alistair Hunter and Alan Ridett, Sunergy Ltd; Matthew Knight, EST; Paul Ciniglio, Drum Housing; resident Charlene Heaver, and Jo Williamson from Sustainable Homes.

Sustainable Homes Goes from Strength to Strength

With an ever increasing membership and the results from our recent user survey showing that we are a valued and vital service to the social housing sector, things are on the up for

SHREC: keeping the green financial ogre at bay

Drum Housing want to set up a Sustainable Housing Renewable Energy Consortium of housing sector partners to help mainstream renewable energy innovation.

The potential advantages of this joint approach include reduced purchase and installation costs through economies of scale, identification of grant funding to support renewables in schemes, and a way to share knowledge and experience.

For more information contact Paul Ciniglio, Innovation & Environmental Manager at Drum on 01730 403055.

Sustainable Homes.

Kwest undertook the survey in January 2005, to assess the impact of Sustainable Homes; establish the current level of sustainability within the sector; and identify areas where further support is needed.

The results confirm that Sustainable Homes is making a difference, with 75% of respondents agreeing that we have assisted them to improve the environmental performance of their homes. It also revealed that the sector values us as an authority on sustainability and rates many of our services as highly valuable and useful.

The Housing Corporation, as funder of Sustainable Homes commented, "These are very encouraging results showing that Sustainable Homes is respected for its environmental advice. It is heartening that their influence in the sector is growing".

Results also show that the sector is making some progress on



sustainability, with EcoHomes seen as the key resource for measuring this. However over half feel that they need assistance in achieving the 'Very Good' rating, which will be required for the 2006-08 Housing Corporation bid round. Training and guides are identified as the key tools that would assist in achieving this, reinforcing the development of the new EcoHomes Support Programme - the programme of support we are delivering on behalf of the Corporation (see the front page for more details).

These exceptional results have been further supported with our contacts database recently exceeding the 2000th membership mark, confirming that the sector is eager to tap into our services. If you would like further information about the help available from Sustainable Homes please contact us.

Help in healing the high rise Tower Blocks



Sustainable refurbishment taking place on Integer's Westminster Towers project.

A new website on the sustainable refurbishment of tower blocks has gone live. www.sustainingtowerblocks.org is an interactive website which has information on all aspects of design for renovating tower blocks.

It has sections on all the facets of refurbishment, including: integrating renewable energy, case studies, involving residents, improving energy efficiency, reducing water use, reducing waste generated, and much more.

The DTI sponsored website provides options for sustainable refurbishment with the aim to

facilitate the regeneration of the 3000+ residential high-rise blocks in the UK.

Residential tower blocks in the UK have thrown up plenty of social, environmental and economic issues since the 1970's.

High-rise apartment blocks are currently the centre of much debate and often the solution has been to demolish them. But in the last few years there has been growing recognition of the value of refurbishment – in terms of 'whole cost' economic efficiency, environmental impact, and the need to provide homes.

Code for sustainable Buildings: All change?

A new Code for sustainability is to be introduced next year. The aim of the Code for Sustainable Buildings (CSB) is to be a single standard looking at all aspects of sustainability in all different types of buildings.

What does this mean for EcoHomes, and, in turn, what does this mean for developing associations who have to build to it?

The ODPM, who are introducing the Code in 2006, are in discussion with the Building Research Establishment (BRE), who own EcoHomes, as to what role EcoHomes will play in the new Code. At the moment it seems likely that the environmental elements of the Code will be based on EcoHomes, building on widespread sector recognition of

**What do you think?
Tell us for our new-look
back page, in your next
newsletter.**

the standard.

The Government's recently published updated national sustainable development strategy, 'Securing the Future' highlights mainstreaming eco-design through the Code. Other notable mentions include the revision of Part L of the Building Regulations, the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive, and the Sustainable and Secure Buildings Act.

The 'Ensuring It Happens' chapter of the strategy is the key ingredient, where it is hoped that words will be put into action. Each government department and executive agency



John Prescott with Clare Wilson, Barry Smith and Jo Williamson launching our 8 steps to Efficiency guide earlier this year – but will it be change for Eco Homes?

will be tasked with developing action plans to set out how they will deliver their commitments in the strategy.

But for housing and construction the eagerly awaited Code seems to hold the key to progressing sustainability within their sectors.

Sustainable Homes will keep you informed as to any new developments.

Funding Renewable Innovations

Are you still confused about whether you can tap into funding for renewable energy without affecting the social

housing grant (SHG) received from the Housing Corporation?

Housing associations are eligible to receive funding from the Clear

Skies programme and the Solar Grants programme. The Housing Corporation has recently clarified its position on the use of such funding in the April 2005 update of the Capital Funding Guide. Here it confirms that Clear Skies and Solar Grants funding has been classed as 'other public subsidy' and is therefore non-deductible from SHG. This reflects the Corporation's desire to encourage associations to consider new and innovative measures relating to energy efficiency and sustainability.

For further information on the Solar Grants programme please contact EST on 0800 298 3978, solarpvggrants@est.co.uk, or see www.est.org.uk/solar.

Further information on Clear Skies is available from www.clear-skies.org or 08702 430 930.

Clear Skies funded solar thermal installation.



Easy to Use Central Heating Controls Can Save Fuel

Good central heating controls save money: replacing older controls could cut fuel bills by up to 17 per cent'. This is the advice from 'Taking Control: a guide to buying or upgrading central heating controls'. The guide was recently published by Ricability, a national research charity, to provide practical



information to enable disabled and older people to live independently.

Jointly funded by Help the Aged, the Housing Corporation's IGP programme and Ofgem, Ricability tested the main types of controls currently on the market and rated

them according to ease of use by people with vision or dexterity impairments. Tests show that the majority can be difficult to use for people with such impairments. The report has useful information on grants and advice on how to keep bills down. To obtain a print copy of 'Taking Control' please send an A4 SAE (for 58p) to: Ricability, 30 Angel Gate, City Road, London EC1V 2PT. Alternatively the guide can be downloaded from the website at www.ricability.org.uk/reports/report-household/takingcontrol/contents.htm.

DIARY DATES

June - October
Regional, free Eco Homes Support training at various locations
jwilliamson@hastoe.com

16 & 17 June, Birmingham
Ecological Building and Services Courses The course explores the basic issues surrounding sustainable construction.
The Green Register.
020 7820 3159
training@greenregister.org
www.greenregister.org

30 June
Design for Solar
One day seminar to be held at the CREATE Centre, Bristol.
The Green Register.
020 7820 3159
training@greenregister.org
www.greenregister.org

7 July, London 14 July, York
Strategies for Developing Sustainable Communities
Seminar looking at what sustainability means. Chartered Institute of Housing.
024 7685 1772
training.conferences@cih.org
www.cih.org/training

12-13 July 7-8 September
EcoHomes Assessor Training
Two day course covering the technical content of EcoHomes and details of the assessment process.
BRE, Watford
01923 664462 bream@bre.co.uk

14 July, Nottinghamshire
Hockerton Housing Project Master Class/Tour – a practical case study of sustainability.
www.hockerton.demon.co.uk

19 July
Coming to the National Housing Federation Conference in Warwick?
Look out for our session: Design for EcoHomes.

13-15 September
resource05
Seminars, workshops and demonstrations focusing on the latest low carbon technologies, and how these can be integrated into buildings.
BRE, Watford www.resource05.com

27 September
Energy and environment conference and exhibition
www.envirenergy.org.uk

European Showcase

The European Housing Ecology Network (EHEN) held their biennial conference in Glasgow in April. The event was attended by some 30 EHEN Members from around Europe, and included



presentations by Swedish Architect Klas Tham, who provided a thoroughly thought-provoking insight into the human dimension that drove his master plan for the regeneration of Malmo. This was followed by the vision that inspired Karl Henrik Robèrt to found The Natural Step and Livia Tirone who outlined the impressive progress being achieved by LISBOA E-NOVA, the Lisbon Energy-Environmental Agency. EHEN members and guests presented a wide number of cutting edge projects on day two of the conference, with a number of excellent presentations. For further information on the work of EHEN visit www.ehen.com.

Website bubbles over with praise

Green street, Sustainable Homes' sustainable refurbishment and maintenance website, was a finalist on the Environment Agency's Water Efficiency Awards held in March. The water section of the website explains the reasons why water needs to be conserved, and the ways in which social housing providers can do so, from greywater recycling to low-flow showers. All the costs and payback times are there too, with details of suppliers. The award was presented by Environment Agency Chairman, Sir John Harman. For more information visit www.greenstreet.org.uk and click on water.

Sustainable Homes

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