

# Green Construction Roundup

## August, 2008 No. 174

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### **Construction News**

#### **Bill Dunster plans luxury log cabins for eco tourists**

Bill Dunster is in talks with tourism companies to design holiday homes that can supply their own power for heating and electricity. The architect's ZEDfactory practice has produced draft plans for 'Landark' cabins, designed to sleep up to six people. The £50,000 holiday homes would not need a connection to electricity, gas or sewerage utilities.

*Building*. 15 August (Pg. 11)

<http://www.building.co.uk/story.asp?sectioncode=29&storycode=3120418>

#### **Government spends £16 million to bail out eco home scheme**

English Partnerships (EP) recently selected a consortium led by a registered social landlord from Sunderland to build the first of 344 eco-homes planned in Peterborough under its Carbon Challenge initiative. However, the agency admitted that it had been forced to commit the funding to ensure the scheme goes ahead during the credit crunch; including handing the £6 million site over to developers for just £1.

*Building*. 15 August (Pg. 16)

<http://www.building.co.uk/story.asp?storyCode=3120550>

#### **Government delays 2016 zero carbon consultation**

The government will not publish the consultation into how it is to define zero carbon until September at the earliest. The publication was expected to go ahead this summer; however, the Housing Minister, Caroline Flint, has said that the delay is down to "a number of complex issues that need to be addressed relating to technical, economic and wider policy considerations."

*Building*. 08 August (Pg. 11)

<http://www.building.co.uk/story.asp?sectioncode=29&storycode=3120053>

#### **Plundered with impunity - illegal timber in UK construction**

According to Greenpeace, the world's rainforests are being devastated by the trade in illegal timber, a trade the UK profits from more than almost any other country.

A recent report from Greenpeace called *Setting a New Standard* indicates that the industry's lack of awareness over the origin of its timber, whether as a result of a genuine mistake or the turning of blind eyes, has shown little improvement.

*Building*. 08 August (Pg. 21-22)

<http://www.building.co.uk/story.asp?storycode=3119853>

#### **Government sets out eco town standards**

The government has set out standards for eco-towns that require all buildings in an eco-town to be zero-carbon and 40% of land to be designated as green space; with at least half of this land to be open to the public as parkland or recreation areas.

The government also wants all eco-town housing to reach at least level four of the Code for Sustainable Homes.

*Building Design*. 01 August (Pg. 5)

<http://www.bdonline.co.uk/story.asp?sectioncode=426&storycode=3119623>

### **UK green building council tackles 2019 target**

An industry-wide task group is to explore what form the code for sustainable buildings should take if the UK is to achieve the 2019 zero carbon target. The UK Green Building Council will lead a six-month consultation process and present the results at its conference in March next year.

*Building Services Journal*. August 2008 (Pg. 8)

<http://www.bsjonline.co.uk/story.asp?storyCode=3119345>

## **Periodical Articles**

### **A mighty wind - the government's plans for wind farms**

It will take something special to cheer the construction industry up at the moment; the creation of tens of thousands of jobs through a £60bn development programme might do it. That's the formidable scale of the government's offshore wind farm plan. Part of its 12-year, £100bn renewables programme, this start will lead to 3,000 offshore wind turbines, each with blades the length of football pitches appearing along our coastline.

The government is under an EU obligation to generate 15% of its energy from renewable sources by 2020, which is heartening news for the construction industry, particularly when project values are in the order of £2.5m per MW of capacity.

Article looking at the government's offshore wind plans which are expected to spark a new multibillion-pound industry, complete with thousands of jobs.

*Building*. 08 August (Pg. 36-38)

<http://www.building.co.uk/story.asp?sectioncode=662&storycode=3119844>

### **The verdict is in on the BRE's super homes. Here's what it says**

During the last two years a few brave firms have tried to design and build Code for Sustainable Homes compliant prototypes, and four even braver ones did so in the spotlight provided by BRE's Innovation Park. Those houses were unveiled in June last year. The tantalising question then was how would the designs perform in practice?

The good news is that all four prototypes have provided insights into the difficulties of meeting the upper levels of the code and made the first steps towards meeting them. This article looks at what can be learned from these pioneers

*Building*. 08 August (Pg. 48-49)

<http://www.bsjonline.co.uk/story.asp?storycode=3119877>

### **House doctor: built in sunshine**

Presently, designers ignore solar gain at their peril. However, in the summer months the home can become a solar oven, and may require air-conditioning. There are a number of ways designers can address these issue.

Article looking at housing design, which, while it must make the most of sunlight to heat houses, is a balancing act that needs careful consideration from the outset.

*Building Design*. 08 August (Pg. 55)

[http://www.bdonline.co.uk/sustain\\_story.asp?sectioncode=331&storycode=3119884](http://www.bdonline.co.uk/sustain_story.asp?sectioncode=331&storycode=3119884)

### **Are fuel cells the future of heating?**

Two projects in London; SOM's Arrowhead development on the Isle of Dogs for Ballymore, and three buildings for Aldgate Place in Whitechapel, by Wilkinson Eyre for Tishman Speyer, are set to derive up to 10% of their energy needs from fuel cells.

The adoption of fuel cell technology to power buildings is partly due to the requirement under the London Plan for all new commercial buildings to cut carbon emissions by 20%, on top of fulfilling Part L requirements. Now developers have to take sustainability seriously to gain planning permission, making fuel cell technology more attractive, despite the greater capital expense.

Article which looks at planned London office projects that will use this method of generating heat and power

*Building Design*. 01 August (Pg. 16/17)

<http://www.bdonline.co.uk/story.asp?storyCode=3119503>

### **DIG! A Dutch method of sorting out energy**

Aquifer thermal energy storage could be about to become big news. This approach to heating and cooling is in widespread use in the Netherlands and is now being used on the redevelopment of the Dartford campus of North West Kent College. Fulcrum Consulting estimates the system could cut carbon emissions from the campus by 30%.

UTES is the process of storing excess heat energy from the summer months. It is the creation of this interseasonal heat store that differentiates UTES from more conventional ground-source heating and cooling systems such as ground-source heat pumps. The two main types of UTES are aquifer thermal energy storage (ATES) and borehole thermal energy storage (BTES).

Article giving a brief guide on how underground thermal energy storage (UTES) works.

*Building*. 01 August (Pg. 46-47)

<http://www.building.co.uk/story.asp?sectioncode=482&storycode=3119541>

### **Green shopping list**

Enhanced capital allowances (ECAs) are a form of tax relief that enables businesses to claim 100% first-year allowances on what they spend on qualifying plant and machinery. The aim is to encourage a low-carbon economy and reduce carbon emissions by influencing the design, availability and uptake of the most energy-efficient equipment types. There are two ECA schemes related to building services

- Energy-saving plant and machinery, as specified in the energy technology list (ETL),
- Water conservation plant and machinery, specified in the water technology list (WTL).

In this article Davis Langdon Mott Green Wall, and property tax specialist Crosher and James, explain what the scheme covers.

*Building Services Journal*. August 2008 (Pg. 47-50)

<http://www.bsjonline.co.uk/story.asp?sectioncode=197&storycode=3119425>

## **Recent Publications**

### **Hemp lime construction**

Hemp lime is a lightweight construction material that can be used for walls, insulation of roofs and floors and as part of timber-framed buildings. It provides very good thermal and acoustic performance and offers a genuinely zero-carbon contribution to sustainable construction. Hemp masonry is also breathable and able to absorb and emit moisture.

Rachel Bevan and Tom Woolley's book gives comprehensive guidance on using this novel material for housing and low-rise buildings, including practical information on materials, design and construction. It is fully illustrated and includes case studies and design details.

Bevan R. and Wolley T. *Hemp lime construction: a guide to building with hemp lime composites* (EP85). IHS BRE Press, 2008. ISBN - 9781848060333

### **Setting a new standard**

This guide, published by Greenpeace, sets out why companies must respond to this issue as a matter of urgency. It shows how to avoid unsustainable plywood and also provides a step-by-step guide to obtaining socially and environmentally responsible timber, certified by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)

To view the Greenpeace report, *Setting a new standard: alternatives to unsustainable plywood in the UK construction industry*, go to

<http://www.greenpeace.org.uk/files/pdfs/forests/plywood-report-august08.pdf>

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