

# Green Construction Roundup

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### **Periodical Articles**

#### **10 changes to Part L for 2010**

The Approved Documents for Part L of the Building Regulations were published today - what are the big changes that will affect builders and designers of domestic properties?

*Building*. 30 April

<http://www.building.co.uk/comment/10-changes-to-part-l-for-2010/3162876.article>

#### **Sustainability in practice: Masterplanning**

Central to Hawkins\Brown's green ambitions for masterplanning the Wharves, Deptford, was a constant focus on sustainability. This article follows the masterplan and focuses on the green ambitions of the project.

*Architects Journal*. 29 April (Pg. 35-38)

#### **Cost model: energy from waste**

The UK produces over 300 million tonnes of waste a year, 24% of which is derived from household or commercial sources. Historically, most domestic waste has been directed to landfill, and on current disposal rates, the UK has less than 10 years' supply of landfill left. Article weighing up the costs and risks of the treatment solutions available.

*Building*. 23 April (Pg. 54-59)

<http://www.building.co.uk/data/cost-model-energy-from-waste/3162156.article>

#### **Solar Sahara**

The constant heat, which makes the Sahara rather inhospitable, is of course a potential energy source.

Last year a consortium of German companies hit on the idea that generating power in North Africa may turn into a moneyspinner. This article reports on a new project about to get underway in Spain.

*New Civil Engineer*. 22 April (Pg. 21)

<http://www.nce.co.uk/features/energy-and-waste/solar-sahara/5216758.article>

#### **Orkney's tidal race**

The Orkney archipelago first became a centre of sea power for the UK during the 20th century when the Royal Navy chose Scapa Flow as its main base for the Grand Fleet in 1914. Now though, the unique geographical location of Orkney may prove to be the UK's most valuable tidal current resource. This article looks at the projects under development.

*New Civil Engineer*. 22 April (Pg. 22-23)

<http://www.nce.co.uk/features/energy-and-waste/orkneys-tidal-race/5216765.article>

#### **Use less water, warns ICE report**

Unchecked water use could destabilise the economy, a report published by an alliance of leading engineering bodies has warned. The study says that over two thirds of the UK's water use is now effectively

imported in the form of water used to produce and transport food, clothes and energy. This article looks at the report and analyses its recommendations.

*New Civil Engineer*. 22 April (Pg. 34-35)

<http://www.nce.co.uk/news/ice/use-less-water-warns-ice-report/5216752.article>

### **Cornwall's geothermal secret**

On a site near Redruth, a groundbreaking project is poised to start drilling in search of conditions hot enough for a commercial geothermal plant capable of powering 20,000 homes. This article looks at the project and its expected results.

*New Civil Engineer*. 15 April (Pg. 18-19)

<http://www.nce.co.uk/features/geotechnical/cornwalls-geothermal-secret/5216478.article>

### **Buried treasure**

In February this year, the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) launched the Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) to help encourage developers and clients to go green while heating their buildings. The scheme recognises that renewable heat is actually a commodity, and vital if the UK is to meet its carbon reduction targets. This article investigates out how the scheme will work.

*New Civil Engineer*. 15 April (Pg. 20)

<http://www.nce.co.uk/features/geotechnical/buried-treasure-the-governments-renewable-heat-incentive/5216492.article>

## **Publications**

### **Green guide for historic buildings**

A comprehensive new guide for anyone wanting to improve the environmental performance of historic and listed buildings has been published today by The Prince's Regeneration Trust. The *Green guide for historic buildings* provides practical step-by-step advice on improving the environmental sustainability of historic and listed buildings.

The guide gives expert opinion on sympathetic adaptations and, crucially, how effective they are likely to be in saving money and reducing carbon emissions. *Green guide for historic buildings* may be purchased online at

<http://www.tsoshop.co.uk>

### **Green Claims Code**

New proposals to tackle greenwash and build consumer confidence in environmental claims and labelling have been announced by DEFRA. Two consultations have been launched - one aimed at helping consumers identify goods and services that are genuinely better for the environment, and another ensuring that energy-using products meet minimum performance standards and are accurately labelled.

The Green Claims Guidance represents good practice to be followed on a voluntary basis, and can be applied to any marketing and advertising that companies wish to make about their environmental performance. The update to the guidance strengthens the principles from the previous guidance and provides more practical information and advice relevant to the current market.

The second consultation proposes increasing the powers available to the National Measurement Office (NMO) by introducing civil sanctions for manufacturers and importers that fail to comply with energy efficiency standards or give inaccurate information on their energy labels. The civil sanctions will provide a fairer, quicker and more flexible method of regulating energy using products than the current criminal sanctions allow. They include notices requiring a manufacturer or importer to stop non-compliant activities or bring products into compliance; monetary penalties which could reflect environmental damage caused, when prosecution is not in the public interest; or voluntary agreements for manufacturers or importers to take actions to inform and reimburse consumers or offer to rectify non-compliance such as amending the labelling.

The consultation on the Green Claims Code can be found at

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/green-claims/index.htm>

The consultation on introducing civil sanctions for energy using products can be found at

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/eup-labelling2010/index.htm>

### **Adapting energy, transport and water infrastructure**

DEFRA has also published a report, *Adapting energy, transport and water infrastructure to the long-term impacts of climate change*. The report focuses on the long-term impacts of climate change (2030s to 2100) to the infrastructure in the three sectors, setting out:

The long-term risks from climate change to the infrastructure, both technically and operationally;

- The need to consider the interdependency risks of the infrastructure system;
- The need for all infrastructure to consider the long-term impacts of climate change in its design, build and operation;
- The adaptation options available as well as the barriers that could prevent action;

The report will inform DEFRA's *Adapting to Climate Change Programme*, its *Infrastructure and Adaptation project*, Government departments and industry. Further information on the project and report can be found at: <http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/climate/programme/infrastructure.htm>

DCLG has published the *Code for Sustainable Homes: A cost review*, which presents the findings of research in 2009 to update and enhance existing cost data for achieving different performance levels under the Code.

The report updates previous reports and supports the *Code for Sustainable Homes: Impact assessment*, of December 2009. On releasing the report DCLG stressed that whilst every effort has been made to develop accurate and representative cost analyses, it is important to remember that these are cost estimates and are not definitive.

To view *Code for Sustainable Homes: A cost review*, go to

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/1501290.pdf>

## **Web Resources**

### **Hydropower opportunities map**

The new *Hydropower opportunities and environmental sensitivities map*, commissioned by the Environment Agency, has located around 26,000 locations where a hydropower turbine could theoretically generate green electricity. However, in reality, only some of these sites could be exploited due to environmental sensitivities, as well as practical constraints such as access to the electricity network.

The report supporting the map found that a sensitively designed hydropower scheme that includes a fish pass could improve the local environment as well as generate electricity in over 4,000 sites. These win-win opportunities are particularly concentrated on rivers such as the Severn, Thames, Aire and Neath.

With government soon to offer subsidies of up to 20p for every kilowatt hour of electricity produced, a medium-sized scheme that typically generates enough electricity for about 32 homes, could receive around £25,000 a year. Average set up costs range from £100,000 to £150,000.

The full report *Opportunity and environmental sensitivity mapping in England and Wales*, and the interactive hydropower maps are available to download at

<http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/business/topics/water/32022.aspx>

### End Note

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