

# Sightings

...focusing on sustainability in the South West

**Q.** How many planet earths would we need if everyone lived and worked the way we do in the South West?

**A.** Three!!... yes, according to the recently calculated eco-footprint, if the region's consumption patterns were replicated worldwide we'd need two extra planets (a sobering thought after all the excesses of the festive season isn't it?).

The sustainability challenge – which all our strategy and delivery in the South West must meet – is to find ways for everyone to live happy, productive lives within the capacity of our one and only planet. In 2005 SSW will be encouraging you all to 'keep an eye' on progress towards 'one planet living' in your area of the South West (see back page).

Meanwhile our In Focus theme this time is sustainable – one planet? – regeneration. As well as talking to the experts, we look at a range of developments from across the South West to see how sustainability thinking is being put into practice.

**Let's build on this foundation in 2005!**

SEE P.2 FOR ANNOUNCEMENT OF SSW'S 'PIONEERING' AWARD!

IN FOCUS THIS ISSUE:

## Sustainable Regeneration

Winter 2004/5

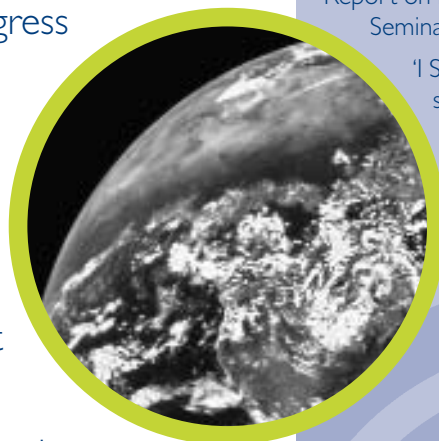
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With our waste increasing year-on-year, a myriad of regeneration activity taking place and substantial population growth predicted, greater resource efficiency has never been so crucial for the region. **Sustainability South West's new 'Pioneers of Packaging' Award** will highlight best practice within the packaging industry and aims to stimulate widespread adoption of a more sustainable approach. Award winners, runners-up and a selection of other packaging products will be showcased in an SSW Consumer Guide.

# No time to waste!

**Controlling waste generation** and managing this potential resource in a more sustainable manner remains a key challenge. As our population continues to grow – we anticipate a million extra people in the South West by 2030 – the consumption of resources and production of waste is set to increase. In addition to domestic growth, industrial and commercial waste is also a pressing issue, for instance construction and demolition waste is anticipated to increase by about 100,000 tonnes a year in the region.

Increases in the amount of waste produced is not the only concern but the unsustainable way in which we manage our resource. Approximately 80% of domestic and 50% of industrial and commercial waste is landfilled. Although, at the moment, landfill is the only workable option for certain waste streams, there is no doubt that materials which could be reused/recovered are needlessly disposed. This trend is unsustainable – especially considering that, in some areas of the region, landfill capacity is predicted to run out in between 3 and 8 years.

October 2004 saw the launch of the South West's Waste Strategy 2004 -2020 'From Rubbish to Resource'. The document (available to download from [www.southwest-ra.gov.uk](http://www.southwest-ra.gov.uk)) sets out the region's vision 'to become a minimum waste producer by 2030, with business and households maximising opportunities for reuse and recycling'. To meet this vision the strategy contains a range of actions including:

- targets – eg by 2020, less than 20% of waste produced in the region will be landfilled
- raising awareness amongst consumers and supporting education for sustainable waste management in schools

- encouraging businesses to sign up to green procurement – for example adopting a 'Recycled Procurement Code'

The Waste Strategy represents a start in the right direction but developing a truly sustainable approach will require us to be more challenging. The following recommendations could be implemented:

- giving local authorities more support to move towards a zero waste strategy as is being pursued by Bath & North East Somerset Council
- applying further incentives to encourage households to minimise waste, reuse, recycle, compost etc.
- offering further help and incentives for businesses to divert more waste away from landfill

## A new award...

Although packaging represents a small proportion of the overall waste stream, excessive quantities and the suitability of materials used attract a substantial amount of attention (see Skye Tech p.31). A more sustainable approach to packaging would see the industry meeting its requirements to protect products in transit and guarantee reasonable shelf life whilst also minimising negative environmental and social impacts.

Some businesses are actively tackling this issue and innovative approaches to packaging are increasing – but more can be done. SSW's 'Pioneers of Packaging' Award, supported by the Environment Agency, Regional Assembly and South West Local Government Association, will highlight 'best practice' inspiring others to review their own approach.

Benefits of more sustainable packaging are clear. Companies not only enhance their competitiveness (by reducing costs and

increasing profits) and benefit from an improved reputation, but help save the world's finite resources, reduce waste to landfill and pollution and create a raft of social benefits... the list goes on and on.

Nominations for the award will be assessed against set criteria which will consider social, environmental and economic elements. Further information on Pioneers of Packaging and how to apply will be available on our website from February 2005.

We look forward to receiving submissions!



- Packaging manufacturers in Britain employ 100,000 people
- About 10m tonnes of used packaging enters the UK waste stream per year
- Poorly designed packaging can lead to a staggering number of accidents. In 1994 an estimated 67,000 accidents involving non-medicine packaging were reported to Accident & Emergency. More recently a 2002 DTI study reported that 88 people had injured themselves using a knife to open the packaging of a new knife!

**Sustainability South West has written to the region's Top 100 businesses to introduce them to our work and give them the opportunity to say how they are 'measuring up' on sustainability.**

As part of our ongoing 'measuring up' campaign, each business received a free sustainability checklist ruler. The rulers, made from recycled computer printers, incorporate the 15 principles of the Regional Sustainable Development Framework. Asking key questions such as 'Are you using local goods & services?' or 'Are you reducing waste?' they are a starting point for all organisations interested in measuring how sustainable their policies and practices are (see SSW's website for more campaign info).

It is clear that adopting sustainable approaches is crucial to long-term business success. Associated benefits include improved competitiveness, environmental performance and community support. Ultimately, company reputation can be improved in the eyes of the consumer. Businesses contacted have been offered membership of a new Business Contact Group with opportunities to get involved in sustainable development activities, input to SSW's work and to be put in touch with the region's network of sustainable development organisations. Sign-up so far includes representatives from the financial services, utility and private housing sectors.

SSW is offering high-level workshops to organisations in the region that would like to more clearly understand the sustainability agenda and its opportunities.

*If you're a business, or know a business, who wants to maximise its contribution to sustainable development please get in touch with us at SSW, details on the back page.*

# A cunning plan?

The Integrated Regional Strategy (IRS) for the South West 'Just Connect' was launched on the 12th November. Coordinated by the South West Regional Assembly, it aims to promote a more 'joined-up' approach to regional decision-making by providing a set of broad objectives and agreed upon priorities for the region. The five key aims of the IRS are:

- to harness the benefits of population growth and manage the implications of population change
- to enhance our distinctive environments and the quality and diversity of our cultural life
- to enhance our economic prosperity and quality of employment opportunity
- to address deprivation and disadvantage to reduce significant intra-regional inequalities
- to make sure that people are treated fairly and can participate fully in society

Just Connect recognises the need for sustainable development to be placed 'at the heart of decision making about the region's future'. It supports the Vision for the region as set out in the Regional Sustainable Development Framework (RSDF) and acknowledges that without applying the RSDF's principles the aims and objectives of Just Connect will not be achieved.

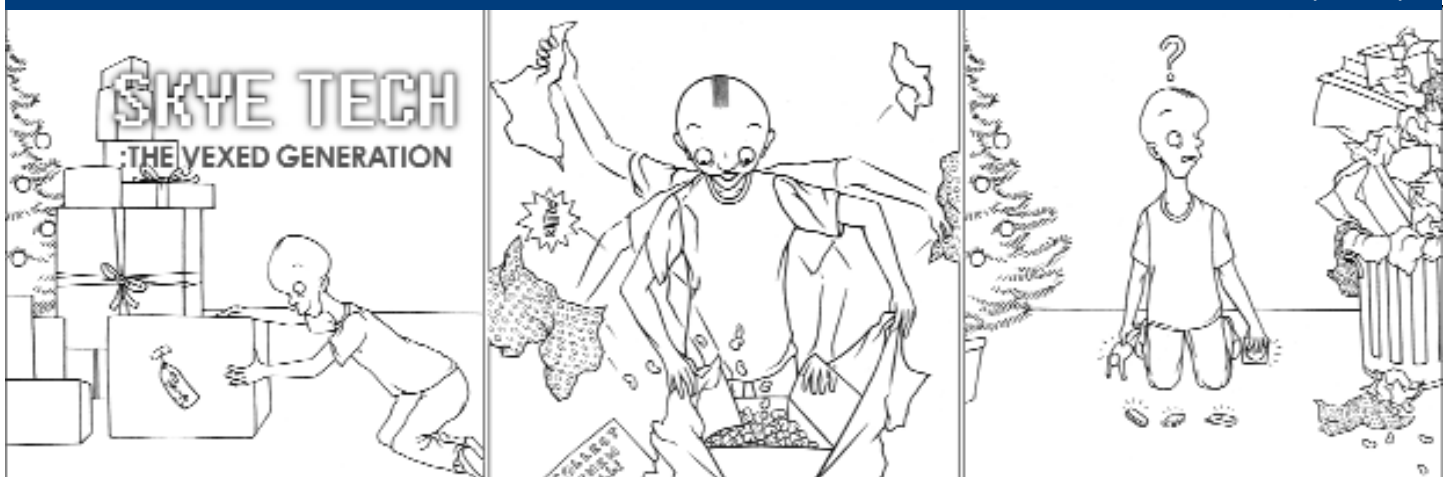
Sustainability South West's sustainability assessment of the draft IRS (based on the RSDF) stressed that integration of the aims would indeed be key to the IRS

supporting a more sustainable region. Without integration any of the aims could be pursued to the detriment of any of the others. The assessment also highlighted the key sustainability challenges to which the IRS must respond, including mitigation of and adaptation to climate change, developing more sustainable tourism and mainstreaming sustainable construction practices. New learning and skills, at all levels, to respond to the challenges and opportunities of the vital sustainable development agenda, were also seen as essential.

The RSDF will continue to be the critical sustainable development reference point and appraisal tool for strategies and plans in the region, providing a mutually supportive role to the IRS. Plans to update and refresh the RSDF will help to further identify the current sustainability challenges and opportunities for the South West. SSW is currently preparing a brief for a fitness-for-purpose report which will inform this process.

The Regional Assembly, in consultation with other organisations in the region, is currently preparing the IRS delivery plan. 'Now Connecting' will be published in 2005 – to find out how you can be involved see [www.southwest-ra.gov.uk/swra/ourwork/integratedregionalstrategy](http://www.southwest-ra.gov.uk/swra/ourwork/integratedregionalstrategy) For a copy of Sustainability South West's sustainability assessment of the IRS please visit the reports section of our website ([www.sustainabilitysouthwest.org.uk](http://www.sustainabilitysouthwest.org.uk)). To find out more about the RSDF see [www.southwest-ra.gov.uk](http://www.southwest-ra.gov.uk) or [www.sustainabilitysouthwest.org.uk/rsdf.html](http://www.sustainabilitysouthwest.org.uk/rsdf.html)

by Tim Floyd



**Simon Hooton** represents economic development issues on SSW's membership. Here he offers his perspective on the key elements of sustainable economic regeneration.

# Regeneration

## Does it work? Is it sustainable?



**Simon Hooton believes that regeneration should take a more integrated and long-term approach.**

**For most of us** having a good job is the key to a good standard of living – consequently, most of us want a strong and dynamic economy to provide that job, that standard of living. Indeed there is a huge amount of evidence that joblessness (and the poverty that leads from it) is the cause of very many issues that feature in disadvantaged and deprived communities. But a strong economy also depends on human and natural capital to thrive. So blending the economic, social and environmental ingredients must be important to the recipe for achieving successful economic development and regeneration.

and taking a short term approach to change driven by the pressures of political voting cycles and demands to achieve annual spend. It is also common for local communities to take a restricted approach, concentrating on immediate benefits and activities within their neighbourhood.

A sustainable development take on regeneration would by definition take a more integrated and long-term approach:

**Not just local** – local interventions would take account of the wider context. Perhaps

regeneration would plan for integrated working and integrated benefits. However, those changes need to be self sustaining and need to last – so they will need to be economically viable too.

I'm sure we can all think of ways of making regeneration more sustainable: through 'state of the art' resource efficiency and waste minimisation in business; through long term investment in new renewable technologies; through offering new skills to the most deprived; through the promotion of physical and mental well-being; through finding

### '...a strong economy also depends on human and natural capital to thrive'

Over the past decades we've seen a trend from 'top down' to 'bottom up' regeneration programmes, with a plethora of urban and rural capacity building and leadership schemes – from neighbourhood renewal to the latest focus on sustainable communities. But despite massive investment of public funds – and whilst the lives of many individuals have benefited – in relative terms, little has changed. The same wards and districts still appear top in the lists of deprivation indices.

There are a number of things that help to explain this. Market failure and the inconsistency of 'trickle down'; an emphasis on treating symptoms rather than causes

building better links to developments and opportunities outside the 'boundaries' of a regeneration area by getting transport links right or by setting up local labour and training schemes to work with major developments.

**People are the key** – regeneration would not be just about buildings. If change is to be lasting, then people must be at the heart – developing individual skills to improve working opportunities and life chances; and developing community skills to plan effectively and holistically for the future.

**Sustainable Development** – the economy would not be managed in isolation. There may be trade-offs, there may be compromises along the way but good

performance measures which would value not only financial profit but also social and environmental factors. But none of these are THE solution – they offer different approaches, new ideas, they are a contribution to the whole.

Ultimately then, sustainable economic regeneration will need wise leadership and investment over the long term. In looking at the three elements of sustainability – social, economic and environmental – we must recognise that environmental assets are finite; that people are the key to change and improvement; and that economic activity can help address many of the causes of deprivation and poverty.

Sustainability South West is delighted to introduce our new Future Foundations manager, **Lesley Seymour**. The role of Future Foundations is to promote sustainable construction in the region and with Lesley, a chartered civil engineer, onboard we are well equipped to boost the opportunities for sustainable construction in the South West. We asked Lesley for an update on Future Foundations and her take on regional and national developments in sustainable construction.

## Future Foundations UPDATE



Lesley Seymour  
Future Foundations manager

# Introducing... new manager Lesley Seymour

Since it was established, Future Foundations has attracted 130 pledgee companies and organisations, each keen to demonstrate a commitment to sustainable construction in the region. The more pledges we receive the greater the

instance, the Government's Sustainable Building Task Group is to present a draft of the Sustainable Building Design Code in February 2005 (at the Sustainable Communities conference in Manchester) and, at regional level, we are developing a

development. If you are involved in any way in construction – from design and procurement to DIY – and are keen to find out more please contact Lesley Seymour at Sustainability South West (see [www.futurefoundations.co.uk](http://www.futurefoundations.co.uk)).



Genesis – the sustainable construction learning & resource centre for the South West based at Somerset College of Arts & Technology in Taunton – 'broke the ground' on the 22 November. Congratulations to all the team at Genesis. This great project is really helping to put sustainable construction on the ground in the region. There are already a number of interesting courses being run at the Genesis site in advance of the new building that is being built through 2005 – keep an eye out for more developments over the coming months.

Jo Matthews, Genesis project manager, seen here with sustainable construction champion Kevin McCloud  
See [www.genesisproject.com](http://www.genesisproject.com)

awareness of the benefits of a sustainable approach to building and refurbishment. With Future Foundations there is an opportunity to share your successes, experiences and challenges in delivering sustainable construction. You can find out more about the issues, check out which companies have pledged (details are updated monthly) and show your support via the Future Foundations website at [www.futurefoundations.co.uk](http://www.futurefoundations.co.uk)

There is a lot going on both regionally and nationally in policy terms that will significantly influence building and infrastructure design in the future. Future Foundations is helping to prepare by encouraging adoption of the principles of sustainable construction. For

regional spatial strategy and housing strategy. The region's Waste Strategy and the Integrated Regional Strategy – both launched in the last couple of months – will each have implications for construction in the region.

It is great to see the support for sustainable construction from many of the public and local authority bodies, a commitment I hope to see widespread across the region over the coming years. The Government's targets and obligations to Kyoto, act as national drivers for the adoption of sustainable construction and this will impact on all sectors.

Sustainable construction can significantly help us in delivering sustainable



**FUTURE FOUNDATIONS**  
Building a better South West

Contact Lesley Seymour on  
**07775 645 954** or email [lesley.seymour@  
sustainabilitysouthwest.org.uk](mailto:lesley.seymour@sustainabilitysouthwest.org.uk)

Dominic Murphy (Creating Excellence) and Lesley Seymour (Future Foundations\*) share their recipes for sustainable regeneration with SSW's Lucy Goldring...

# The ingredients of lasting progress?



Dominic Murphy  
Executive Director  
Creating Excellence

Lesley Seymour  
Manager  
Future Foundations



Creating Excellence, the South West's regeneration centre, was launched in Autumn 2004. It is being developed as a key resource for anyone involved in the delivery of regeneration in the South West and is helping to promote the Government's 'sustainable communities' agenda.

Lucy Goldring spoke to the Director of Creating Excellence, Dominic Murphy, along with Future Foundations manager Lesley Seymour, to reinforce the links between regeneration, 'sustainable communities' and the role of sustainable construction in delivering lasting progress.

Two years ago a RICS Foundation commissioned study found that the majority of built environment professionals were 'sceptical, suspicious or unaware' of sustainability (Source: Sustain: Built Environment Matters, vol. 3 issue 5, p. 34). Initiatives such as Future Foundations and Creating Excellence are helping to change the attitudes of people involved in delivering development.

**Dominic, what is Creating Excellence?**

**DM:** Essentially it's about supporting sustainable regeneration in the South West. Creating Excellence has been set up to act as a hub of skills, knowledge and practical advice for regeneration workers. We have a very wide definition of 'worker' which includes volunteers, tradespeople, professionals, policy makers and civil servants.

**What do you each understand to be meant by 'sustainable regeneration'?**

**DM:** It's about looking beyond the next couple of years to see how regeneration can bring lasting social, economic and environmental benefits for everyone.  
**LS:** For regeneration to be truly sustainable – as well as promoting happy, healthy and viable communities – it should enable us to live and think sustainably, for instance, in how we use energy and resources when working, travelling and in our homes.

**What are the key ingredients of sustainable regeneration?**

**DM:** For me the key is sharing knowledge & skills. Ensuring that communities have the expertise to sustain improvements to their quality of life – from financial management to leadership and mentoring skills – is vital. Policy makers themselves need to develop a

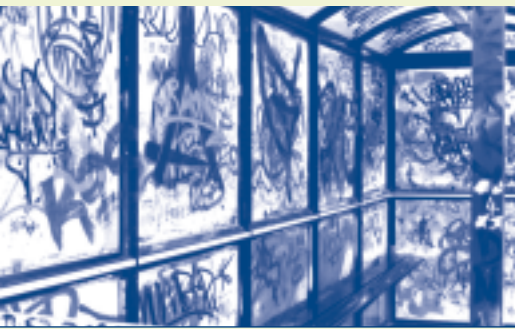
greater understanding of the context in which policies are delivered.  
**LS:** How we deliver the physical forms of regeneration – improving existing and constructing new buildings, houses, infrastructure – is crucial. Building should not be considered as environmentally negative and socially impacting but an opportunity to 'build in' sustainability for the future. Construction professionals, clients and local authorities need support and skills to strive for the 'sustainable communities' we want and that starts long before anything is built. All 'physical regeneration' should be seen as the building blocks for our sustainable future, including responding to perhaps the greatest challenge of all – climate change. Buildings that future generations can adapt and develop without creating mountains of waste, where they can live and work without needing to pollute to get access to services, work and pleasure. Through employing the principles of sustainable construction in regeneration we will be building in employment and skills development opportunities, promoting community ownership and using local materials to promote distinctiveness, support local economies and reduce transportation. And we're not just talking about the long term benefits – sustainable construction, being

water, fuel and resource efficient, saves money straight away.

### **So why hasn't regeneration been more successful do you think?**

**DM:** Policy has tended to be written 'in a vacuum' which is why it often fails at the implementation stage. Regeneration is complex and involves a range of aspects from tackling poor health and housing through to generating satisfying employment and training opportunities. There is not usually a structural solution to be found! The concept of sustainability – social, economic and environmental – needs to be made more relevant to communities and those working with them.

The success of regeneration has also been inappropriately measured with auditing and



accounting models which only address 'inputs' – money pumped in to an area, jobs created, new houses built etc. A 'ticking the boxes' approach can detract from the big picture and be used to cover up a lack of holistic knowledge. The perspective on-the-ground is that regeneration is often hampered by bureaucracy and the lack of guarantees over long-term support. Both of which make long term planning very difficult! Again this all comes back to skills. As the Egan Review confirmed there is a shortage of skills across a whole range of sectors which impact on community development eg local and regional government, economic development, community work, planning and construction...some of this can be traced back to the economic downturn of the 1980s which resulted in a lack of people going into certain trades and professions.

### **Do you think the government's re-focus on sustainable communities is helpful?**

**DM:** The Government's 'sustainable communities' plan of 2003 was narrowly focussed on simplistic solutions to housing shortages (particularly in the South East). In the wake of the Egan Review sustainable communities needs to be embraced as more of a holistic concept. ODPM have even

adopted 'Creating Sustainable Communities' as their strapline! If Egan's recommendations for across the board skills development are taken forward there's a real chance for policy to deliver sustainable communities.

**LS:** There is a real opportunity for construction professionals to be innovative, working with communities to deliver solutions that help us live sustainably. The ultimate clients of any development work are the people that use it. The skills we need to develop are partnership working, understanding the natural capital of the planet and the value that we can bring to create sustainable communities.

### **What two things would really drive forward sustainable regeneration in the region?**

**DM:** Firstly a re-focus on 'experiential learning' for regeneration professionals, away from theory. Schemes such as 'interchange' which encourage policy-makers and deliverers to share perspectives are beginning to support a more realistic approach but there's a long way to go yet! Secondly more sophisticated measurements which would evaluate the long-term 'outputs' from regeneration in terms of community well-being. This would also have the benefit of being able to share learning from 'what works' more easily.

**LS:** Design briefs based on what we need, thinking more about how we can deliver the maximum benefit in what we do and measuring this not only in terms of money or wealth. In addition, solutions that are appropriate in scale, respect environmental limits, enhance the economy and natural environment, should be rewarded just as much as landmark buildings.

### **What are your top tips for regeneration practitioners wanting to support a truly sustainable South West?**

**DM:** Generally – make sure you understand the context in which you are working by finding out what's already happening. Don't take things on face value either – go to the source and look into the detail. When starting off a new regeneration programme ensure communities have access to good independent financial advice on all their entitled benefits and how to spend them in the most sustainable way. In the old days we called these "benefit take-up" campaigns! They work by putting money directly into residents' pockets – money which is guaranteed to be spent locally. Setting up independent advice centres prior to any development is always a good move. Finally,

you can always talk to us at Creating Excellence! (See [www.creatingexcellence.org.uk](http://www.creatingexcellence.org.uk))

**LS:** Yes I agree – get out there, find out what people really want, why they want it and what they really need to achieve. Through regeneration needs we have the opportunity to learn and plan so that future generations can benefit and not need to re-visit a legacy of unsustainable construction. We have the knowledge and experience in the region to seize this opportunity to create the homes, offices and infrastructure that will allow us to live sustainably.

\* see p. 5 for more info on Future Foundations, the region's sustainable construction initiative, or log on to [www.futurefoundations.co.uk](http://www.futurefoundations.co.uk)

## **The Egan Review**

*'...in general development is not resulting in communities in which people can live wholesome and prosperous lives, let alone experience a sustainable twenty-first century.'* (from the foreword of the Egan Review)

The Egan Review ('Skills for Sustainable Communities') was published in April 2004, following the Deputy Prime Minister's call for a major Skills Review of all sectors involved in delivering and sustaining regeneration. Main findings included the need for:

- a common goal and shared understanding of 'sustainable community'
- visionary leadership and inclusive decision-making at the local level
- effective and transparent delivery processes especially via the development of sustainable community strategies
- and – most fundamentally – skilled and committed individuals working together

The biggest skills gaps were identified in the areas of leadership and partnership working, as well as in governance, economic planning, communication and risk-taking.

The development of a National Centre for Sustainable Community Skills is currently being taken forward as a key recommendation.

The South West is teeming with 'regeneration activity' – from small-scale community self-builds and innovative social enterprises to ambitious brownfield redevelopments. We turned our sustainability searchlight on the region to highlight just a few examples of regeneration schemes which aim to help people live and work in more sustainable ways. Those contacted were invited to supply a 'top tip' for anyone inspired to follow their example.

# Local futures

## Springhill Cohousing Community, Stroud

Based on the Danish model this cohousing development in Stroud is the first of its kind in the UK. The community of 35 houses and flats involves elements of communal living – such as shared meals, laundry facilities and childcare – organised around a central community space. The development itself incorporates super insulation, solar panels, timber frames and triple glazing. Composting and car share schemes also save resources.

**TOPTIP:** "Just do it – take risks and don't get bogged down by detail. Adopt clear guidelines and decision-making processes. Have an overall coordinator. Be supportive of one another."

See [www.cohouses.net](http://www.cohouses.net)

## Rural ZED, Landrake & Camborne

Cornwall Sustainable Building Trust (CSBT) launched a competition to find A Novel Sustainable Affordable Solution in 2003. The winning entry, Bill Dunster's 'Rural ZED' (Zero Emissions Development), is developing five dwellings in Landrake, Cornwall. Rural ZED will include features such as roof mounted wind turbines, solar panels, solar heated water, recycled and local materials, high insulation levels and carbon neutral wood-burning stoves. CSBT (funded by the Learning & Skills Council with additional finance from the European Social Fund) has been generating support by working with trainees and local businesses to build a Rural ZED demonstration house at a redundant factory in Camborne. The house went on show at 'The Sky's the Limit' exhibition in December resulting in a flurry of potential commissions.

**TOPTIP:** "Be positive, ignore sceptics and work exclusively with enthusiasm. Otherwise just do it with integrity and learn from the inevitable mistakes."

See [www.zedfactory.com](http://www.zedfactory.com) and [www.csbt.org.uk](http://www.csbt.org.uk)

## The High Bickington Project

The High Bickington Project emerged in 2000 when Devon County Council approached the parish with the idea of redeveloping a redundant county council farm to regenerate the village. It is hoped that the development will deliver 52 houses (the majority low cost), workspace, a new primary school, a playing field and community woodland. Sustainable building techniques are to be used where possible and renewable energy options are being investigated. The project team are currently preparing a feasibility study and awaiting outline planning consent, with construction work anticipated from later this year.

**TOPTIP:** "Consult widely and often to ensure plans are meeting identified needs and have support of key people and agencies."

See [www.highbickington.org](http://www.highbickington.org)

## The Development Trust Model, Plymouth, the South West and beyond

Development Trusts (DTs) are a growing national movement of community-led enterprises. Taking a holistic approach (and often working in partnership with other agencies, organisations and businesses) they seek to tackle the particular social, environmental, economic and cultural needs of a locale or community of interest. As independent bodies, DTs aim for financial self-sufficiency, with any wealth generated channelled back into the community. There are 38 trusts in the South West - several active in Plymouth - working in rural, urban and suburban areas. Many have grown from small projects to being key sustainers of community regeneration. The Development Trusts Association supports and promotes the DTs work by exchanging good practice and info, researching, advocating and lobbying.

Please contact Diana Moore, Regional Development Manager, Development Trust Association on [d.moore@dta.org.uk](mailto:d.moore@dta.org.uk) or tel 01392 276 805

### The Village Quarter, Port Marine, Portishead

This brownfield development of 1500 new homes in Portishead, is located on the site of the ash tip of a former power station (now a marina). It is thought that the development, led by a consortium of Persimmon Homes and Crest Nicholson working with North Somerset Council, is the first major housing development to opt for BRE's EcoHomes accreditation system. Most of the dwellings are to be rated 'Good' and 15 houses and 15 apartments will achieve the 'Excellent' rating. The development will also include the creation of a wetland wildlife reserve. The first residents of The Village Quarter began moving in last October.

See [www.persimmonhomes.co.uk](http://www.persimmonhomes.co.uk)  
[www.portmarine.co.uk](http://www.portmarine.co.uk) and press release section of [www.n-somerset.gov.uk](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk)

### INTEGER 'Intelligent & Green' Homes, Calne & Swindon

In 1999 Integer's Millennium House starred in BBC's Dreamhouse series. Westlea Housing Association, with the support of North Wiltshire District Council, also piloted the first real Integer homes in the village of Cherhill near Calne. Integer houses are environmentally-friendly and use intelligent and green technology. Features such as solar water collectors, grey water recycling and removable walls result in very low running and maintenance costs and built-in adaptability to suit changing lifestyles. Resident feedback means user-friendliness is continuously improved. A second South West Integer project was completed by Westlea in 2003 as a demonstration project for Swindon.

**TOP TIP:** "Find consultants and contractors that have done it before. Fix a budget and design to that, don't make cuts as you design. Get tenants involved as early as possible."

See [www.westlea.co.uk](http://www.westlea.co.uk) and [www.integerproject.co.uk](http://www.integerproject.co.uk)

### Ashley Vale Self-Build, Bristol

Ashley Vale Self-Build was formed as a Ltd. Co. by the Ashley Vale Action Group (AVAG) – local people who responded to an unpopular commercial development proposal for a local brownfield site by buying and developing the site themselves. The self-builders involved are a co-op of people building their own houses on the 20-plot site, which also includes a derelict office block. This is being developed as a community space, financed by the sale of part of it as flats. The self-builders have agreed to consult the community, and each other, on design and are signed-up to agreed standards of ecological sustainability.

**TOP TIP:** "Spend lots of time in preparation and planning, particularly in team building if it's a group project."

See [www.ashleyvale.demon.co.uk](http://www.ashleyvale.demon.co.uk)

### Morlands Enterprise Park, Glastonbury

The SW Regional Development Agency, in partnership with Mendip District Council, are developing the largest derelict industrial site in Somerset into a major mixed use scheme. Morlands will incorporate commercial space for companies in sectors such as renewable technologies, ICT, aerospace and the creative industries with an onsite crèche, conference centre and business advice. The purpose-built units and Grade 2 listed building conversions will be sustainably constructed and facilities will include major onsite recycling and a renewably-powered combined heat and power plant. Surplus power could be used in the Glastonbury area and/or sold back to the National Grid. It is anticipated the Morlands development will generate £25 million of additional investment for the area.

**TOP TIP:** "With projects of this scale, partnership working is essential. Morlands success so far is down to a good partnership between the Regional Development Agency, Mendip District Council, local businesses and residents and other organisations."

See [www.morlandsenterprise.com](http://www.morlandsenterprise.com)

### The Dorset Centre for Rural Skills, Blandford Forum

DCRS is a not-for-profit organisation providing training courses and information in sustainable building techniques – such as timber frame, straw bale building, earth structures, lime mortars, low impact foundations and solar gain – and traditional rural skills including blacksmithing, pottery, hedge laying, coppice working and woodland management. DCRS, which also acts as contractor to construct buildings, was set up in 2003 (funded by the Leader Plus 'Chalk and Cheese' programme). Founders Rob Buckley and Suzy Carr were concerned about both affordable homes and skills shortages, as well as the environmental impact of much construction.

**TOP TIP:** "Never underestimate the costs of setting up an enterprise, both capital and revenue, nor the input required from dedicated staff."

See [www.dorsetruralskills.co.uk](http://www.dorsetruralskills.co.uk)

## EVENT REPORT

**Buying The Future: Sustainable Procurement Seminar** Andy Baker reports on Local Sustainability Group for the South West's November event

# Money back guarantee

**Procurement, or purchasing**, by local authorities in the UK accounts for £40 billion of public money per year and so it is essential that councils in the South West region start to build a sustainable approach to how they pay for their products and services. This can benefit the

environment and improve quality of life for the region's citizens and also mean that public spending supports the local economy. Councils that spend wisely can actually help to boost the prosperity of their counties and districts by spending in a way that keeps the money circulating within the local community.

The Local

Sustainability Group for the South West (LSGSW) was developed as a network for local authorities and other public bodies in the South West to co-ordinate and develop towards a more sustainable region. The group identified procurement as a major area for action and the event on 16 November 2004 was designed to give the public sector the incentive, knowledge and tools to move sustainable procurement forward in their organisation.

Speakers at the event included Helmut Lusser, founder of Global to Local, who showed what positive steps could be taken in sustainable procurement despite the constraints of legislation. Katherine Cope of Camden Borough Council explained how they had taken great strides in sustainable procurement culminating in them recently being awarded 'Fair Trade Borough' status and Annette Williams of Devon County Council explained how public

money could be retained in the local economy through thoughtful purchasing.

The event was attended by sustainability officers from local authorities but also by procurement officers, some of whom were new to the sustainable development agenda. Workshop sessions were informative and practical with delegates tackling the task of developing and maintaining a sustainable procurement strategy for the long term with the added benefit of sharing ideas and challenging excuses for not taking a more sustainable approach. Delegates were also given the opportunity to think about their personal area of influence and draw up an action plan of next steps they will be taking as a result of the seminar.

**Left: Delegates look at the opportunities and challenges of sustainable procurement.**

## How was it

**Kathryn Edwards**

*Sustainable Prosperity Project Worker  
Devon County Council*



*Why are you here?*

I am part LSGSW and have been helping them to promote sustainable procurement as an area for action. I also work closely with our sustainable procurement unit and with Annette Williams who gave a presentation earlier on Sustainable Procurement and the Local Economy.

*What do you think so far?*

Really enjoyable! I've learnt a lot, especially from Camden Borough Council's experience. Helmut from Global to Local gave good advice on getting round legislation that prevents a more sustainable approach, for example, by insisting on minimum quality standards through labelling.

*What do you hope will happen, and what will you personally be doing, as a result of today?*

I hope the conference will help people in local authorities to see that they are not

### Agreed pointers and ways forward for progressing sustainable procurement:

- Get organisation-wide commitment
- Ensure regular internal and external communications
- Aim to retain money within local economy
- Simplify tendering process for local companies
- Celebrate successes
- Provide appropriate training for relevant staff and suppliers
- Integrate procurement processes
- Link procurement practices to Gershon efficiency agenda and Government agenda
- Commit necessary resources to achieving goals, using savings through efficiency where possible
- Monitor and review procurement activities at all stages
- Champion sustainable procurement at a high level via Regional Centre of Procurement Excellence

# for you?

alone and that there is a network of support for them to deal with these issues. Personally I would like to raise a lot of the points made in the presentations with my co-workers at Devon County Council that are working across a range of areas. For example, colleagues that are addressing issues around local, healthy, sustainably farmed and organic foods and those working on the resource efficiency agenda to promote recycling and cost savings, to SMEs for instance. Health and well-being promotion are also relevant areas.

**Sean Adams**  
Procurement Officer  
Dorset County Council



*Why are you here?*

To see how sustainability can be built into our procurement process and to link sustainability in with our normal procurement practices. We're already doing quite a bit but we need to start looking more at whole life costs, for all our contracts, to see how we can get away from just buying goods at the cheapest price.

*What do you think so far?*

It's been really interesting. I didn't realise that there is so much going on. That's possibly something we have all learnt out of today –

we need this system of networking so we can know what each other are doing, so we can benchmark and find out best practice and that type of thing.

*What do you hope will happen, and what will you personally be doing, as a result of today?*

I've come today with our Sustainability Officer and I have already said to him that when we do our stakeholder analysis – right at the pre-tender, pre-contract stage – we should have a look at who's going to be affected and what the impacts of our procurement process are going to be on the local economy and the environment.

**Kerry North**  
Environment Officer  
North Somerset Council



*Why are you here?*

Because we are at the final stages of developing a procurement strategy and we need to make sure that we are thinking about the right things as far as sustainability goes.

*What do you think so far?*

Very useful, there's been some good 'hooks'

that I can take back and hopefully try to get a few more people on board – it's just picking out those important phrases that can capture people.

*What do you hope will happen, and what will you personally be doing, as a result of today?*

I hope to see some more joined up thinking. This is one thing that we are trying to develop anyway with our procurement team – there's a team of us that have already got together and we're going to meet again soon to see what we can learn from today. Hopefully we'll be able to take it forward a step and actually start rolling it out to other departments. We understand that it is a long process and have been given timescales of a few years but if we can get an action plan that will enable us to visualise the end result then the whole thing may seem a little bit less daunting. At first it can seem like 'oh, it's never going to happen, it's such a big agenda', but if you can break it down into steps and phases and start to see some of the results then it can motivate people to keep going with it.

For more info on the event, and on LSGSW, please contact Steve Marriott (Secretary) on **0117 922 4462** or email [steve\\_marriott@bristol-city.gov.uk](mailto:steve_marriott@bristol-city.gov.uk)

## sustainability is...



...making where you live so good you don't need to travel

Congratulations to Bruce Douglas SW Regional Development Agency who suggested this issue's sustainability is...

Illustration by T. Floyd

## Your snap shots wanted!



# i spy sustainability?

**Is the South West sustainable?** How about trying to answer this question without using any words?!

Sustainability South West is collecting images of the sustainable and the unsustainable from around the region during 2005. You'll be able to see the collection grow on our website from the New Year

Copyright of the photograph remains with the author, but you agree that we (and any third party we authorise) may reproduce without payment any accepted submissions for publicity and promotional purposes in connection with promoting sustainable development in the South West and any possible follow up touring exhibitions (including any publication associated with this initiative and or exhibition). The author of the photograph consents to being identified, unless the author has indicated otherwise. We are unable to return any postal submissions which will become our property on receipt by us.

([www.sustainabilitysouthwest.org.uk](http://www.sustainabilitysouthwest.org.uk)).

To help us promote a sustainable South West, email or post your pictures, noting whereabouts in the region your 'sustainability I spy', to the SSW office (please note terms and conditions below).

Seeing is believing!  
*Leslie Watson & the SSW team*

## Sustainability South West is the region's independent champion of Sustainable Development.

Its members represent all sectors making connections to generate ideas for a more sustainable economy, society and environment in the South West. It is playing a major role in shaping future plans in the region working with key regional organisations. SSW produced the Regional Sustainable Development Framework, *A Sustainable Future for the South West*. For further info about our activities and free publications visit [www.sustainabilitysouthwest.org.uk](http://www.sustainabilitysouthwest.org.uk) or contact the SSW office.

## Glimpses



### Charity begins at home!

Sustainability South West's application to become a charity has been accepted. The decision follows the Charity Commission's recent recognition of sustainable development as a charitable purpose. It is hoped that charitable status will strengthen SSW's role as a 'critical friend' to regional agencies and help it to publicise its message to a wider audience. *For the full story see SSW website/news*

### Energy Boost

The region's first Green Energy Awards ceremony were held on 15 November in Plymouth, recognising communities, businesses and local authorities who are actively embracing renewable energy. Winners were BICAL ('Best Business Innovation'), Cornwall County & District Councils ('Most Proactive Local Authority'), Chy An Gweal Sheltered Housing ('Best Community Scheme') and Holsworthy Biogas Plc ('Best New Renewable Energy Scheme'). *For more information see [www.regensw.org.uk](http://www.regensw.org.uk)*

### Net Gains?

Following a Regional Development Agency commissioned study of the South West's fishing industry, a new fisheries 'Strategic Action Plan' is being developed. The plan will impact on all aspects of the sector and is being informed by a series of focus groups and a major conference being hosted by the Agency on the 17 January at Devon County Council.

### Long term vision of Cornish Businesses rewarded

Charles Secrett, former director of Friends of the Earth, presented the Cornwall & Isles of Scilly Sustainability Awards in Truro on 17 November. Guests enjoyed Cornish delicacies, including wines from the Camel Valley, before trophies hand-crafted by local potter Paul Jackson were presented. The awards, celebrating and sharing sustainability good practice within Cornish business, went to Bedknobs Bed & Breakfast (overall winner and best small business), Looe Bay Holiday Park, Stralfors plc, Chris Sandercock of D S Smith Speciality Packaging (best individual employee) and the Coastal Hoppa Bus, Looe Bay Holiday Park (best employee led initiative).

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*the independent champion of sustainable development in the South West*

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Designed by Peta Morey

**Sustainability South West's current membership:** Gareth Allen **Carlton TV**; Bob Bewley **English Heritage**; Mike Birkin **Friends of the Earth**; Richard Cresswell **Environment Agency**; Julian Dennis **Wessex Water**; Mike Fox **Torbay Council**; Mark Harold **National Trust**; Chris Hines **The Eden Project**; Simon Hooton **South West of England Regional Development Agency**; Bryony Houlden **South West Regional Assembly**; Brian Kennelly **GeoScience Ltd**; Catherine Le Grice-Mack **South West Regional Assembly**; Jim Longhurst **University of the West of England**; Anita Longley **RWE Innogy**; Jackie Longworth **Trade Union Congress**; Liz McGrath **Learning South West**; Tim Render **Government Office South West**; Louise Thornhill **Countryside Agency**; Janette Ward **English Nature**; Brendan Yates **Department of Health**

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