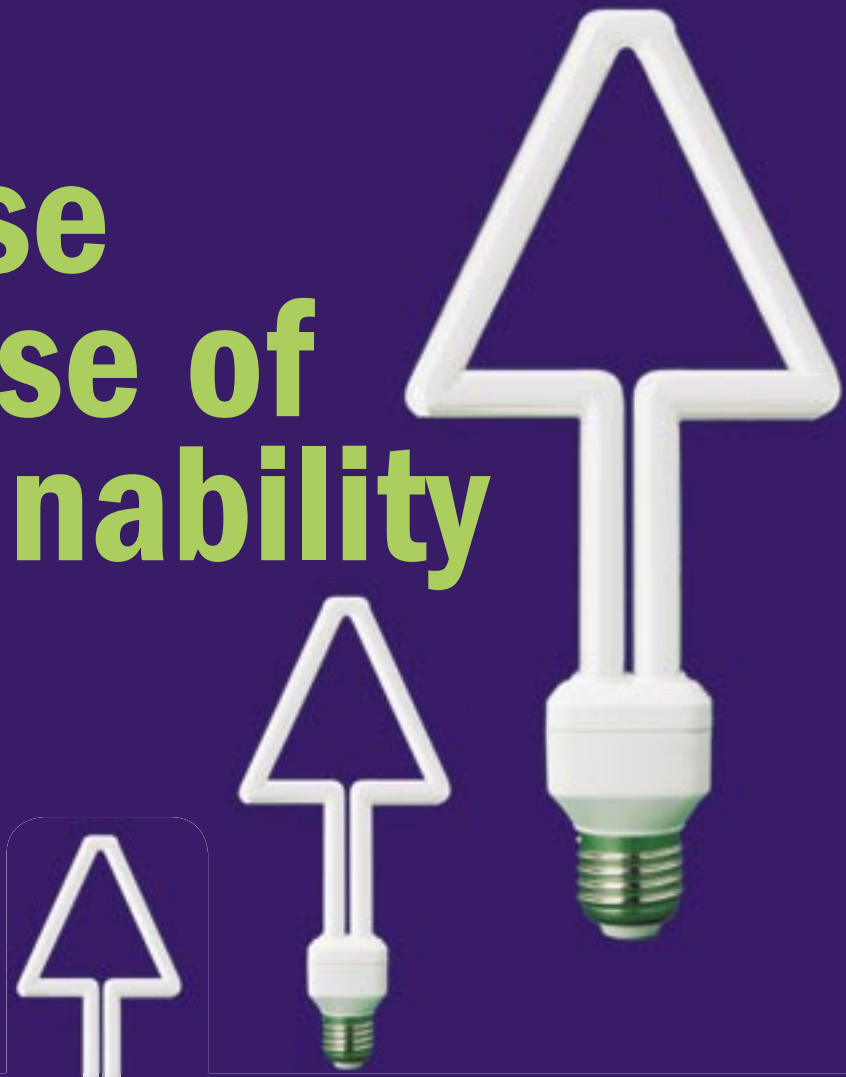


# EXCELLENSE

building skills - changing places | issue 4

## the rise and rise of sustainability



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# in the news

If you have any news stories you'd like to share, **email: [southeastexcellence@seeda.co.uk](mailto:southeastexcellence@seeda.co.uk)**

## south east excellence 2008–2011

South East Excellence is developing its three-year Action Plan (2008 – 2011). It reflects the South East England Development Agency's (SEEDA's) increasingly strategic role – especially in working with, and building the capacities of, partner organisations to deliver the objectives of the Regional Economic Strategy (RES) for the South East.

The first priority is building the region's capacity to deliver exciting sustainable communities through developing skills at a generic and technical level. The key focus for South East Excellence will be promoting positive engagement between councillors and developers in addressing barriers to delivery. South East Excellence

will look to continue to promote design quality and understanding through initiatives such as the Design Champions' Club, but will also be looking at developing new ways of disseminating advice, for example revamping the website to include design and sustainability sub-sites.

Just as important is our role of inspiring and engaging young people, particularly in promoting the built environment as a career. South East Excellence is looking to explore how employers can encourage young people into the sector.

The final part of the plan looks at the knowledge transfer between our universities and practitioners. The 'Places from Spaces' project is

designed to inspire and educate, focusing on real issues and real places, and raising awareness of the value of quality public space, through a collaboration of local universities and young people, the Architecture and Built Environment Centres and local authority councillors and officers.

Underpinning all of this work is the theme of promoting and sharing good practice to help raise the standards of existing practice in the South East, addressing barriers to delivery and thus increasing productivity. The Action Plan is an ambitious one, and the activities will need the participation of its partners in order to be successful. We have high hopes! Our Action Plan will be available in the spring.

## eco towns forging ahead

With some 50 expressions of interest to build eco-towns submitted to the Government following the publication of the prospectus in July 2007, a regional conference examining the whole concept is to be held in Reading on 4th March. The event, organised in conjunction with the Town and Country Planning Association, will explain the idea and how the Government wants these types of settlement to add to the new housing stock. It will also be a good opportunity for all involved in the built environment to have their say on the development of eco-towns.

Put simply, eco-towns will be small new towns of at least 5,000–20,000 homes achieving zero carbon and sustainable living, incorporating the best design and architecture as well as environmental technology. Each is to have its own identity, but with reasonable links to nearby towns or cities to

access jobs, transport and services, although it must have its own local facilities in terms of a secondary school, shopping, business space and leisure. A mix of housing is envisaged including a substantial proportion of affordable accommodation. A government decision is expected very soon on the first five to be developed by 2016.



## sustainable design: seen the show? now see the movie

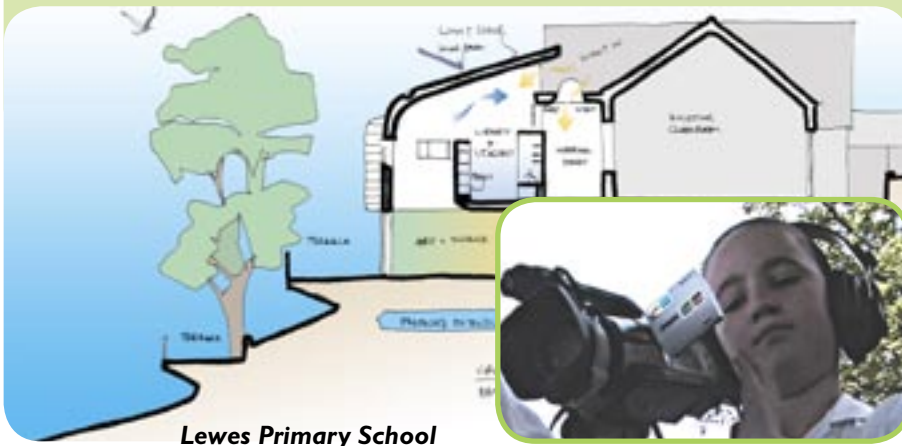
Lewes-based BBM Architects has been designing 'sustainable' buildings for 15 years, including the Creative Media Centre in Hastings, an art and science centre for a Lewes Primary School and The Bridge, a community centre in Hastings. Its design philosophy is to use locally sourced materials incorporated into environmentally-friendly contemporary design; for

example, St. Pancras School in Lewes used local chestnut wood for the exterior and sheep's wool insulation within. The School's pupils filmed the whole design and construction process and the resultant DVD is now being sent to all primary schools by the Department for Children, Families and Schools.

BBM's ideas and techniques have also been put together in

an exhibition, 'Built Ecologies: translating landscape into architecture' to help other designers wishing to explore the principles. Following successful showings during National Architecture week in Lewes and, subsequently, at the Faculty of Arts at the University of Brighton and in the City's Jubilee Library, it will be featured at the Weald and Downland Museum near Chichester, SEEDA's Guildford headquarters and then at the Royal Institute of British Architects.

[www.bbm-architects.co.uk](http://www.bbm-architects.co.uk)



Lewes Primary School

## vision jigsaw

Regeneration takes time, often many years, and it's important to retain the original vision and 'big picture'. Hence the Southampton City Vision project, from the Solent Centre for Architecture + Design (SCA+D), to create a changeable model of how the City Centre is being developed over the next few years.

A modular model of central Southampton is being created in 80 x 50 centimetre square panels made by the University of Portsmouth using computer-generated images. Each image represents a scale part of the City Centre presenting a

joined-up view of the whole area – showing, for example, the regeneration of Woolston Dockyard in relation to other nearby projects. As each project moves forward, so the image will be updated giving a live picture of the City Centre as it develops. Paul Grover of SCA+D says: "We hope that having this permanent exhibition available from March 2008 will mean that developers, architects, planners and councillors will be able to examine possible designs within the context of the future shape of the City Centre, as well as being helpful to the community when their views are sought on potential new developments."

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

## green gold for Greenoak

Woking-based, Greenoak Housing Association, has won the Housing Corporation's Gold Award for Excellence recognising its commitment to sustainability. Since 2000, the Association's strategy has seen the achievement of an energy efficiency rating in its existing stock of nearly double the UK average. New build projects have been targeting CO<sup>2</sup> emissions at less than a quarter of the current Building Regulations Standard, incorporating a host of sustainability features including triple glazing, A+ appliances, water saving and rainwater drainage and whole house ventilation systems.

For more information on award schemes and winners, visit:

[www.southeastexcellence.co.uk](http://www.southeastexcellence.co.uk)

[www.greenoakha.org](http://www.greenoakha.org)

# design for learning

image © CABE / Steven Hall

**Learning about place-making and building sustainable communities really doesn't have to be through death by PowerPoint or sleep inducing seminars. South East Excellence says learning can be through a whole series of different processes which can inspire and engage even the most reluctant learner.**

Developing skills in place-making is like painting on a blank canvas – you can start creating unconstrained by conventional thinking. There is no single training programme that will solve this problem, rather a collection of different methods to compliment on the job training. South East Excellence has been encouraging and supporting many new approaches to learning.

## network knowledge

'Learning by network' is proving very effective as groups come together and devise a number of activities. The Kent Design Initiative (KDI) is one example; it brings together all of the County's local authorities as well as architects, engineers and house builders all committed to raising design standards.



Study tour of Greenwich Millennium Village (CABE)

One product has been the KDI Enabling Review, run by the Kent Architecture Centre, which helps developers use an Enabler who acts as their critical friend, considering issues which may need to be resolved if planning consent is to be gained.

We asked Enabler Shane Jell, an architect with MKA Chartered Architects, for his views on the process. "It's very informal; we seek to guide the process and not interfere directly but literally enable solutions to be found. Typical issues might be a developer trying a one size fits all approach and not taking into account the context of the area. I try to talk design quality, use of urban space, locality – all the fundamentals. Sometimes they may not follow your suggestions, but usually it sets the development along the right lines." The Enabling process can help, agrees Adrian Legg, a planner with Dartford Borough Council. "It can help to

**"It's very informal; we seek to guide the process and not interfere directly but literally enable solutions to be found."**

Shane Jell  
MKA Chartered Architects

overcome an impasse between developer and planners to take things forward and also enables developers to see the benefit of real design input."

## tour teach-in

Another KDI project has been a study tour for councillors organised by Kent Architecture Centre. Gravesham Borough Council took part in a two-day study tour which combined theoretical seminars with visits to locations where delegates could see the principles in practice. Visits took in Oxford Castle and Gun Wharf Quays in Portsmouth. "Our members welcomed

**Littlehampton:  
east beach cafe**



**“Our members learned a great deal about the use of public space, how historical design can work with modern design, and how and where tall buildings fit into the urban landscape.” ‘S’ Sanga**

the tour,’ says ‘S’ Sanga of Gravesham. “They learned a great deal about the use of public space, how historical design can work with modern design, and how and where tall buildings fit into the urban landscape.”

### **learning laboratories**

In West Sussex another network making a big impact is the Five Towns Network (5TN), used as a Learning Laboratory to develop training for sustainable community creators. 5TN consists of Selsey, Bognor Regis, Littlehampton, Worthing and Shoreham who are seeking to share common principles as each progresses their regeneration programmes. A key part of this is to develop the skills needed for such an extensive programme, hence funding by South East Excellence and the Academy for Sustainable Communities (ASC).

The training programme is designed to raise skills standards locally. A diagnosis of skills gaps was made, and as a result, a £50,000 grant was awarded to set up a comprehensive programme using a variety of learning styles. Co-ordinator, Gemma Warr, takes up the story. “We were able to experiment with lots of ideas, ranging from attendance at the Improvement and Development Agency’s (IDeA’s) Annual Seaside Housing Lecture to urban design, sustainability appraisal training and project management training. Future modules include master classes on strategic leadership and democracy for councillors and a study tour. The evaluations of our courses to date have been highly positive.”

### **mastering sustainability**

Short, sharp focused learning in master classes is growing in popularity. South East Excellence is running a series of events, the latest of which looked at Tall Buildings. Organised by the Urban Renaissance Institute, it looked at the environmental and design issues associated with delivering tall buildings and debated whether and how they can be a regeneration tool.

### **game plan**

South East Excellence is also piloting the ASC supported ILM Level 7 Leading Sustainable Communities ‘Raising our Game’ (ROG) programme in the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH) area. ROG is a professional development programme for senior and middle managers with responsibility for delivering sustainable communities; from planning officers and economic development officers to architects and house builders. The course is based on action learning groups where discussions, exchanging ideas and experience, provide opportunities and motivation.

### **electric learning**

Another method of training is e-learning. Working with Urban Design London (UDL), South East Excellence is part funding the development of a built environment e-learning resource. This will support design professionals, public sector officers, councillors and engage a broader audience in the issues surrounding urban design. It is designed to provide users with access to high quality built environment e-learning materials that can be easily navigated and used flexibly by all.

Developing skills and the capacity to deliver training is a key action for South East Excellence. Different methods of learning are needed in order to meet the many needs of those that require training as well as opening up the opportunity for wider participation. South East Excellence is keen to hear of learning initiatives in the South East which will help close the gap.

### **for more information on new ways of learning**

South East Excellence: [www.southeastexcellence.co.uk](http://www.southeastexcellence.co.uk)  
Kent Design Initiative: [www.kent.gov.uk](http://www.kent.gov.uk)  
KDI Enabling Review: [www.architecturecentre.org](http://www.architecturecentre.org)  
Five Towns Network: [www.5-town-network.org.uk](http://www.5-town-network.org.uk)  
Urban Renaissance Institute: [www.urban-renaissance.org/urbanren/index.cfm](http://www.urban-renaissance.org/urbanren/index.cfm)  
Raising our Game: <http://www.raisingourgame.org/> (or call Harri James on 01483 470108)  
Tall Buildings Master class: [www.southeastexcellence.co.uk/tbMaster.php](http://www.southeastexcellence.co.uk/tbMaster.php)



**Pool under construction at Stoke Mandeville**



*The organisers of the London 2012 Games aim to leave a lasting inspiration for the future through their One Planet Sustainability strategy. ExcellenSE asks how the South East will benefit.*

# the distance event

"We want to leave a glow after 2012 which will not only make the whole world feel good, but also show how a major project like this can be sustainable before, during and afterwards," says Dan Epstein, Head of Sustainable Development and Regeneration at the Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA). "We are aiming for the 2012 Games to set a gold standard in sustainability."

The success of the UK bid to stage the Games in 2012 was due to many things but the

'One Planet Olympics' concept caught the imagination as much as anything. The creation of the Olympic Park in East London will be one of the biggest construction projects in Europe but sustainability will remain at its heart. Climate change, waste, biodiversity, healthy living and inclusion are some of the guiding principles. These will run through the planning, design and construction of the Olympic Park, venues and infrastructure, continuing during the Games and be central to the reuse of the Park afterwards.

## **crown jewel**

Dan Epstein says: "We're aiming to be the jewel in the crown – the best design, the best construction; the best in everything". When the ODA started to prepare the site, 250 buildings needed to be removed, with the aspiration to recycle or reuse 90 per cent of the waste created by demolition, with some building structures reused in their entirety elsewhere.

Across the site, around 1.5 million cubic metres of soil is being excavated, tested and where necessary, cleaned

using special washing machines to eliminate contamination. Throughout construction, recycled materials will be used and construction traffic minimised through the use of rail or water where possible. Most journeys made to the site from other parts of London will be made by public transport, which will be greatly improved through investment in existing lines and stations as well as the creation of new infrastructure.

### lasting lessons

Dan Epstein hopes that the processes they are going through will be a lasting lesson in planning, design and construction as well as project management. "The whole project is being documented fully and the ODA already has a substantial library available. We have people going out to speak to all sorts of audiences all the time because part of our task is to educate as well as be a beacon of sustainable design," he says. The ODA also hopes for a lasting culture of sustainable thinking which will be passed down through its contracts with hundreds of smaller suppliers. "It is this which will influence the long-term delivery of sustainability, as it will promote skills and training in design and construction," says Dan Epstein.

### advantage south east

The South East will clearly benefit strongly from the glow of the Olympic project and is working hard to secure direct advantages. 'Compete, Create, Collaborate' is SEEDA's strategy for the Games, with sustainability central to the regional offer. SEEDA's Olympic Co-ordinator,



Rowing at Eton Dorney



Tennis at Eastbourne

Paddy Herlihy, believes there will be many benefits. "Improved infrastructure, such as a major Park and Ride at the Eton Dorney Rowing venue, will promote public transport use rather than car travel. For the Paralympics, we are looking at ways to improve disabled access to our airports and train stations. For example Gatwick Airport is scheduled to completely revamp disabled access to its train station."

### opportunities

Generating opportunities for South East businesses and improving skills are important too. The regional Construction Commitments 2012 Roadshow briefed companies on how they could tender for Olympic work. A key theme was the 2012 Construction Commitments, which can be adopted by all organisations committed to best practice. These include

procurement, sustainability, health and safety, design quality and client leadership and are designed for all construction companies so London 2012 inspires a legacy of performance improvement.

The London Organising Committee for the Olympic Games (LOCOG) and the ODA have just launched the London 2012 Business Network to help businesses win Olympic contracts. A key element is 'CompeteFor', a business dating agency, matching companies to the thousands of Olympic opportunities. This is co-funded by SEEDA whose support network, Business Link, is running a series of Fit to Supply, workshops to help and advise companies; for details, go to [www.businesslink.gov.uk/southeast/2012](http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/southeast/2012)

EnviroBusiness, one of SEEDA's sector consortia promoting new environmental technologies, is supporting companies as they look for Olympic opportunities. Creative industries will also have a part to play in helping to design real time information such as communicating to mobiles or blackberrys information about travel and ticket availability. The region's reality games experts, under the direction of the South East Media Network, are also devising the ultimate Olympic game aimed at encouraging young people into sport.

That London 2012 is going to be a major world festival is not in doubt; if its legacy is an enduring understanding of achieving sustainable living, it could be a world shaping event.

[www.london2012.com/business](http://www.london2012.com/business)

All you need to know about the what, who,  
when and how of the built environment.

## sustainability by BRE & SEEDA

The Building Research Establishment (BRE) and SEEDA are developing a series of one day events to give professionals in Growth areas a guide to the latest developments on sustainability. Themes are likely to include:

- Delivering the Code for Sustainable Homes
  - Micro-renewables & low carbon technologies
  - Construction resource efficiency
  - Latest refurbishment techniques
  - Working with developers
  - Working with innovative housing manufacturers.
- For more information contact: Gemma Davis on [davisg@bre.co.uk](mailto:davisg@bre.co.uk)**

## events

For more details, go to: [www.southeastexcellence.co.uk/events](http://www.southeastexcellence.co.uk/events)

13 & 14 March 2008, London

Collaborative Working for Sustainable Communities: Taking the Lead

16 April, London

Tomorrow's Property Today - sustainable live/work space in the low carbon economy

2 April 2008, London

RTPI Urban Design Master class: the art of making successful places

22 April 2008, London

Negotiation Skills Seminar

**For more information on these and other events, please visit: [www.southeastexcellence.co.uk/events](http://www.southeastexcellence.co.uk/events)**

South East Excellence is developing a set of case studies to share good practice in the region. Please send examples of projects that you feel are worth promoting to [southeastexcellence@seeda.co.uk](mailto:southeastexcellence@seeda.co.uk).

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If English is not your first language we can provide a summarised version of this document in Punjabi, Hindi, Gujarati, Urdu, Polish and Bengali. The document is also available in large print, Braille, disk and audio cassette.



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## growth points task group

In December, the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) launched the Design Task Group for Growth Points, to bring specialised action learning about design to public sector organisations involved in the Government's areas earmarked for major growth. Two well attended meetings have been held so far, in London and Leicester, with a further session planned for Southampton later in the year.

Since 2003, The Design Task Group concept has been successful in stimulating learning and networking in areas where strong growth in housing is planned, to ensure that high quality design and sustainable development go hand in hand. Last summer, the Department of Communities and Local Government asked CABE to develop a Group especially targeted at Growth Points. Attendance at Group events is by invitation only and for public sector professionals working on this programme.

Previous Group meetings have included a presentation on the Dutch housing renewal programme, Vinex, a presentation on Green Infrastructure Frameworks and a focus on use and implications of the Manual for Streets. The practical part of the day was around using the 'Building For Life' Toolkit.

For more information contact:  
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