

e co-development group newsletter

Issue 2
March 2010

Welcome to the second issue of the TCPA's Eco-Development Group (EDG) Newsletter. In each issue of the Newsletter we will update you on the latest training events and opportunities. We will also use the Newsletters to highlight key issues that need to be taken into account as eco-towns are developed and assessed. This issue of the Newsletter highlights a number of new Government policies, recently published for consultation or in final form, which will be helpful in the planning and delivery of eco-towns.

Eco-towns represent an exciting future, and the TCPA hopes that as many individuals and organisations as possible will join us in making them a success. We hope you find the Newsletter a useful resource and we look forward to working with you.

Events Calendar

Key date for your diaries:

- The next **Eco-Development Group meeting** is due to take place in St Austell on **Thursday 22 and Friday 23 April**.



Freiburg – study tour at the end of June

Other events and training opportunities:

- **18 May** Eco-towns Energy Seminar, TCPA, London (further details to follow shortly)
- **26-27 May** Eco-towns Seminar, Greenbuild Expo, Manchester
- **July (TBC)** Eco-towns Skills Seminar, TCPA (further details to follow shortly)

European Study Tours

- **Tuesday 29 June-Friday 2 July**
EDG visit to Basel, Switzerland, and Freiburg, Germany. Further details about this exciting trip can be found on the TCPA website at www.tcpa.org.uk/events.php?action=event&id=14
- **October** EDG visit to Malmö, Sweden

You might like to consider entering your Eco-town Masterplan to the RTPI Planning Awards. The deadline is 12 April – see www.rtpiplanningawards.com/welcome.asp

Eco-news: Green overhaul for the planning system

On 9 March Housing and Planning Minister John Healey announced a triple boost for councils tackling climate change by updating planning rules, granting nearly £10 million to improve green skills, and backing further progress in the 'second wave' of eco-towns.

Policy

Three planning policies have been overhauled so that councils have the very latest targets and guidance to address climate change, putting them in the driving seat of change. Combined, the new Planning Policy Statements (PPSs) on climate change, the natural environment, and coastal change will give councils a 'green planning rulebook' to help ensure that new sustainable developments are planned and built with the aim of reducing carbon emissions reduction and with future climate in mind.

- **Draft PPS on Planning for a Low Carbon Future in a Changing Climate:** Proposals

for the new Climate Change PPS (see the Box below) are intended to ensure that new developments are built in the right places, utilising sustainable sources of energy and encouraging the installation of electric car charging points. The proposals aim to ensure that more of our energy will be drawn from renewable sources, that applications for such sources are approved more quickly. Local councils have a hugely important role to play, so empowering local authorities and giving them the skills to approve such projects could release more green energy from developments.

- **PPS25 Supplement: Development and Coastal Change:** The finalised guidance on managing coastal change, published as a supplement to PPS25, gives new planning powers to coastal communities to help their local economy and tourist industry. All inappropriate development such as housing will continue to be banned in areas vulnerable to coastal erosion. But there will no longer be

Climate Change PPS

The Climate Change PPS aims to provide tougher, streamlined green rules for planning, reflecting the Government's latest carbon reduction and renewable energy targets; and to ensure that councils put combating climate change at the heart of future development. The new policy will not affect green belt boundaries, nor will it change the tough rules already in place to protect the green belt.

The proposed new planning guidelines aim to:

- ensure that councils plan for the provision of low-carbon and renewable energy in their areas;
- protect communities from future harmful effects of climate change, such as water shortages and increased temperatures;
- put councils centre stage in securing electric vehicle charging infrastructure in new developments; and
- help businesses by ensuring that councils plan for renewable energy at the local level, rather than a one-size-fits-all approach that makes developers source renewable energy on-site.

The PPS consultation document, *Consultation on Planning Policy Statement: Planning for a Low Carbon Future in a Changing Climate*, can be accessed at www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/1499780.pdf

a blanket ban on temporary development that has wider economic benefits, that is an acceptable coastal use, and which could be relocated when required.

Planning Policy Statement 25 Supplement: *Development and Coastal Change* can be accessed at:

www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/coastalchange.

- **Draft PPS on Planning for a Natural and Healthy Environment:** The Draft Natural Environment PPS aims to provide councils with updated guidance on planning and providing for 'green infrastructure' – networks of parks, cycleways, rivers, allotments and street trees. The guidelines also aim to boost the nation's health and fitness by allowing more sports clubs to stay open after dark, using high-tech floodlights that cut light pollution and so giving people greater opportunities to make use of facilities such as sports pitches in the evenings.

The consultation document, *Consultation Paper on a New Planning Policy Statement: Planning for a Natural and Healthy Environment*, can be accessed at: www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/naturaleenvironmentconsultation

Funding

The Government has allocated nearly £10 million in funding to boost local authority expertise as 'green champions', updating the tools and know-how they need to develop sustainable housing and energy sources for their areas.

Eco-towns

The Government has also confirmed that a further two new areas have been added to the proposed eco-town 'second wave' originally announced in December 2009. Two more councils – East Devon District Council and Fareham Borough Council – have expressed an interest in using eco-town standards for new settlements in

their area. The Housing and Planning Minister has allocated a share of £10 million for these areas, originally announced in December, to help generate plans and 'early win projects'. The funding is intended to help get proposals and masterplans off the ground, introducing greener living not only for people who go on to live in the new eco-towns, but for the thousands of people already living nearby.

Other policy news

Another important policy development is the *Warm Homes, Greener Homes* Household Energy Management Strategy, which was launched in early March by Energy Secretary Ed Miliband, Communities and Local Government Secretary John Denham and Planning and Housing Minister John Healey. The strategy puts a clear emphasis on the role of energy companies and local authorities in tackling climate change. It recognises councils' important existing responsibilities for cutting carbon emissions, and their abilities to bring the right people together, reducing the burdens on individual householders. Councils can also use the planning system to establish large-scale community heat and energy sources.

The strategy builds on the pioneering Local Carbon Framework pilots announced in January. These nine authorities are ready to help the Government identify the support needed for all local authorities to follow the lead of the best, make sure that unnecessary barriers to action are swept away, and identify the tools needed for local authorities to do the job.

The Household Energy Management Strategy, *Warm Homes, Greener Homes*, can be accessed at:

www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/what_we_do/consumers/saving_energy/hem/hem.aspx



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