

# be

built environment  
Vol 6 • 2005

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OXFORD  
**BROOKES**  
UNIVERSITY

School of the **Built Environment**

## Introduction

Welcome to the Winter edition of *be*. We have around 1500 readers overseas, particularly in Asia and Australia, and our thoughts go out to those many people whose lives have been touched by the terrible impact of the Tsunami. How appropriate that the work of the School here in Oxford should have, over the years, contributed so much to training some of those who will be in the front line of the disaster recovery projects on the ground now. We wish you well in your endeavours.

Many people are surprised to find that a School such as ours also has internationally recognised expertise in Humanitarianism, Development Practices and Refugees and Forced Migration Studies. Each of these areas and many others are given some exposure in this issue.

Furthering the understanding and production of sustainable environments is one of our key aims. This is a theme which recurs throughout the material we present to you in this issue. Our new MSc in Spatial Planning began in September with spectacular success, 80 new students and 12 prestigious scholarships awarded by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. This exciting new fast track programme prepares people to work in Urban and Regional Planning and draws on the School's long experience of Planning, Environmental Impact Assessment and Urban Design.

I will end this introduction by drawing attention to two achievements of which the School is particularly proud. Earlier this year we finalised an exciting new partnership with Lingnan College which is part of the prestigious Sun Yat Sen University in Southern China. From 2005 we will jointly offer a Masters Degree in Real Estate Management. The "RIBA President' Medals" is an international -and highly competitive- suite of prizes awarded annually to students and tutors. The competition is intense and truly global. Therefore it is especially pleasing to record here that Angela Hatherell, received a commendation for her Graduate Diploma dissertation, *Who do they think they are? Perceptions of architects in twenty first century Britain*. Angela's tutors were Helena Webster and Ben Stringer of the Department of Architecture.

We wish a happy, healthy and successful new year to all of our readers.

**John Raftery**  
Pro Vice Chancellor and Dean

### Dean Appointed as Pro Vice Chancellor

Professor John Raftery has been appointed as Pro Vice Chancellor. Apart from joining the Senior Management Team of the University, his portfolio will focus on external relationships covering the Region, Europe and International. He took up his post on January 1st 2005. The post will be held concurrently with continuing as Dean of School.



## Our contribution to sustainable development



The reduction of poverty, the growth in population, migration, the quality of urban life, and the impact of climate change: these are the key issues we face in the 21st century. Many of the solutions to these issues lie in sustainable development, which means ensuring development does not breach environmental constraints, and meets broader social and economic goals that can be sustained into the future.

The built environment has a vital role in contributing to sustainable development. An essential part of delivering high quality professional work in these areas is gaining an understanding and developing good relationships with other disciplines and with the public. This is just what the School of the Built Environment offers in its wide range of taught postgraduate Master's courses.

For instance, the impacts of globalisation on human rights, the environment and land uses are addressed in programmes on development practice, planning in developing countries, and environmental assessment; programmes on energy-efficient building, estate management, real estate and construction, spatial planning and urban design promote the delivery of better, more sustainable buildings and built form. The understanding of existing built environments, and ways to conserve them, are covered in programmes on vernacular architecture, cultural studies and historic conservation; while programmes in transport planning, tourism planning, spatial planning and energy efficiency explore the links between travel patterns, car dependency, land uses and climate change; and programmes on regeneration provide an integrated view of urban renewal.

Possible future developments include a jointly professionally-accredited course in planning and development, and a generic programme in sustainable development, drawn from the wide array of exciting courses offered within the School.

The School has a very high profile in research and publications in all these areas (brought together through the Oxford Institute for Sustainable Development, OISD), and all our taught postgraduate programmes benefit from the OISD's lively and cutting-edge work.

Elizabeth Wilson, Director of Postgraduate Programmes. Email: [ebwilson@brookes.ac.uk](mailto:ebwilson@brookes.ac.uk)

## The world's first Swikipedia:

The Architecture Research Unit is developing the first sustainability website that will be built by the people actually using the site.

Rajat Gupta and Sue Roaf are working with The Energy and Resources Institute of India, and the Institut Català d'Energia of Spain, on a 2-year European Commission funded project to develop the first multilingual, online, wikipedia (open-source encyclopaedia) on sustainable buildings and development. The website is known as a Swikipedia and aims to act as an evolving repository of information on the practices and success of sustainable building design. It will include tools on building performance evaluation, case studies, e-forums and links to other online resources.

Rajat and Sue say that the Swikipedia aims to enable users to contribute in a common international language, adding to global understanding of what constitutes real sustainable development.

Rajat is appealing to anyone involved in sustainable building projects to get involved. "Please join us in this exciting challenge of testing whether 'open-source' science really does work. Become a Swiker yourself by adding to the site. Every entry is acknowledged, and will help us build a common sustainable future."

For further information contact Rajat Gupta [rgupta@brookes.ac.uk](mailto:rgupta@brookes.ac.uk) or see [www.sustainable-buildings.org](http://www.sustainable-buildings.org)



## Graduate presents TV style programme

A stylish new television series about modern architecture and contemporary design is being presented by Charlie Luxton, who graduated with an MA in Architecture from Brookes in 1996.

Charlie is co-presenter on *Dreamspaces*, a BBC Three programme which features topical issues concerning design and architecture, visiting stunning architectural locations worldwide. The other presenters are architect David Adjaye and Justine Frischmann, former lead singer with Elastica.

Charlie, who was born in Sydney and has lived in the UK since 1983, is now the creative director of Make Communications, a company involved in events and television. In November 2004, the company opened a new 'urban experience' on London's South Bank featuring giant wind turbines.

He is pictured at the Brookes Architecture End of Year Show, where he was the special guest exhibitor.



## Tackling the challenges of climate change head on

We all know that the world is warming as a result of climate change, but what many of us might not realise is that buildings are responsible for around half of all climate change emissions.

It's a 'hot' issue, and few would disagree that two of the most important challenges facing us today are reducing climate change and working towards an equitable share of the earth's resources for all.

Hildebrand Frey, key note speaker at the 2004 Passive and Low Energy Conference in Eindhoven, pointed out that if everyone was to live at a standard similar to people in this country, we would need to expand onto two more earths! Even Tony Blair has pointed out that global warming is a more serious and widespread issue than terrorism.

In order to minimise the enormous impact of buildings on the environment, rapid changes are taking place in the UK. Increased standards are now required for construction and refurbishment of buildings through the building regulations. The introduction of the Carbon Tax in January 2005 will focus the attention of the business community on the need to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

For these reasons, we expect graduates of our Master's course in Energy Efficient and Sustainable building to be in great demand from employers, says Mary Hancock, course chair.

Students develop skills that will help them to evaluate building proposals to predict their environmental impact and to produce buildings that

use less energy. One of our modules focuses particularly on post-occupancy evaluation. This might not sound very exciting but the huge number of buildings not operating as their designer intended makes this study exciting in its possibilities.

Previous graduates have gone to leading offices in environmental design, working for practices such as Ken Yeang, Feilden and Clegg, and Bill Dunster, responsible for the Bedzed eco-development in London, as well as in smaller innovative environmental and sustainable design practices across the globe. "Our goal in this course is no more and no less than to provide the foundations for the new types of buildings we will need to combat changing climate, and to make our students leaders in the race to do so," says Mary.

## Architecture teaching fails to look at existing buildings

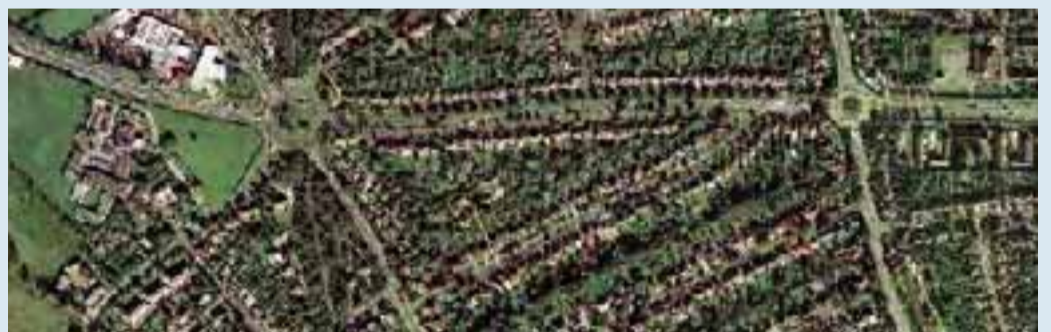
While over a third of building contracts in the UK involve existing building stock, and the workload of many architectural practices is concerned with work to old buildings, this trend is not reflected in the way architecture is generally taught.

The current architectural education system continues to focus on the design architect - and existing buildings rarely make an appearance in the design studio.

A growing commitment to sustainability will mean fewer new developments on greenfield sites. The Architecture in Regeneration course, formerly Built Resource Studies, has for over 20 years been delivering a Master's in Art and a route in the Architecture Diploma programme to equip students with the skills to reuse and regenerate the existing building stock.

The strength of the design-based course lies in the international practice and research experience of teaching staff, and the active integration of the course into practice.

The projects set for students are 'real' projects, often with real 'clients' who are keen to see the outcome from students' work. Graduates of the course are highly regarded in the workplace and see it as an added advantage in finding employment working with existing buildings and urban areas.



## How can the significance of environmental impact be measured?

Evaluating the significance of environmental effects is a critical component of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and has implications at all stages of the process.

Despite the widespread use of the concept of impact significance in legislation, guidelines and Environmental Impact Statements, it remains one of the most complex and contentious of EIA activities.

What makes it even more challenging is that the nature of the term "significant" in decision-making evolves as the availability of information changes as a proposal progresses through the EIA process.

Staff from the Department of Planning recently hosted a one-day conference at Harcourt Hill Campus, with the primary aim of widening the understanding of issues surrounding the evaluation and communication of impact significance in EIA.

The conference was sponsored by the Economic and Social Research Council and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, and drew upon the findings of a major two-year research programme conducted by the School's Impacts Assessment Unit. It attracted 85 EIA practitioners drawn from consultancy, local authorities, the Environment Agency, and the development industry.

Conference convener Dr Graham Wood, Senior Lecturer in Environmental Assessment and Management, said: "The controversial issue of impact significance is one that environmental managers and decision-makers face all the time. This conference has been a great success in providing the opportunity to hear insights and experiences from a range of experts in the field.

"I was also absolutely delighted to catch up with past graduates of our MSc in Environmental Assessment and Management who have since gone on to establish successful careers in practice."



## Assessing the environmental impacts of Heathrow Terminal 5

Work on one of the largest construction projects in the UK, the new Terminal 5 for BAA, is currently underway at Heathrow Airport.

The roof of the spectacular terminal building, designed by Richard Rogers Partnership, can now be glimpsed from the M25. Construction work on this £4 billion scheme started in 2002 and Terminal 5 is due to open in 2008.

As well as the terminal and concourse itself, construction includes a new slip road off the M25, and an 87 metre high control tower. Major tunnels are required for extensions to the Heathrow Express and Piccadilly underground lines.

The project also involves the removal of a Thames water sludge works, and the diversion of two rivers.

Students on our MSc in Environmental Assessment and Management and the MSc in Environmental Management and Technology have been visiting Heathrow Airport to follow the progress of the T5 project since it began.

“As well as touring the site itself to take in the sheer size and scope of the project, they have been finding out about environmental management involving key issues such as energy efficiency, air quality, noise, waste, water, biodiversity, transport, and community liaison,” says Elizabeth Wilson, joint course leader on the MSc in Environmental Assessment and Management.

“More fundamentally, they have been examining bigger issues such as, what is the future of unrestrained long-haul flights? And what are the implications for climate change?”

“What brings these issues home to them, including the high proportion of international students, is the fact that they have all flown into or out of Heathrow at some time.

“During their MSc programmes they develop practical environmental solutions to some of the issues involved. Both courses have excellent links with practice, and we have outstanding employment records for our graduates.”



### The greening of the tourist industry

Tourism is an industry that has been referred to as both a blessing and a blight. However, tourism developers are increasingly becoming aware of the importance of maintaining and nurturing the environment, while placing greater value on sustainable development.

The Department of Planning runs two Tourism Master's courses - Tourism and Environmental Management and Tourism Development and Planning.

Sustainable development is a key theme that runs through both of them.

The Tourism and Environmental Management course emphasises a wide range of techniques and methods associated with environmental management. The Tourism planning and Development course emphasises the development aspects and the role that the planning system has to play in ensuring that they remain sustainable and viable.

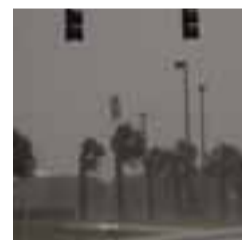
## Graduate survives hurricane in her storm proof house

As the global climate change deepens, the need for more and more resilient buildings grows. MSc graduate Stephany Thomas wrote on the subject in *Ecohouse 2: A design Guide*, and here tells of how she fared as Hurricane Charlie approached Florida where she had built the ecohouse Porpoise Point for her family last year.

“Hurricanes in the Keys are taken very seriously when you lie exposed on the southern most point in the United States, and the only escape route to mainland Florida is a 200 mile long, two-lane highway.

Unlike most of the 20,000 other homeowners who live in Key West, we did not evacuate, despite Hurricane Charlie having predicted wind speeds in the range of 111-130 mph, capable of causing extensive damage to homes and trees. Porpoise Point's storm proof features include the following: 36-inch (91 cm) diameter concrete pylons buried eight feet (2.4m) below the rock, 12-inch (31 cm) thick concrete block walls in-filled with steel, storm shuttered, double glazed windows (that not only provide thermal resistance to heat gain but also provide a noise barrier), and a carbon filtered rain water cistern for potable uses. All habitable areas are 13 feet above the ground level for protection from tidal surges,

Riding out these hurricanes for those who do not evacuate means frantically preparing days in advance by stockpiling supplies, boarding up apertures, tying down patio furniture and pruning trees with potential flying missiles like coconuts and



branches. During these preparations, we were able to dive for lobsters on a nearby sand bar and enjoy the “calm before the storm”.

Although Hurricane Charlie moved off its projected course and just skimmed the Florida Keys, we felt the effects of 60 mph gusts, tidal surges that flowed over our sea wall, and lightning cracking all around us. We were relieved that we could lower the storm shutters at the touch of a button making the house conveniently secure.

Hurricane Charlie challenged our ecohouse and we were able to sleep through the storm. On waking the next day, we found neighbours picking up gutters and eaves that were torn from their homes and laboriously removing the plywood sheets that protected their windows. We suffered no damage at all which fully justified the 20% incremental construction cost.

There is no doubt that the Porpoise Point ecohouse will endure future hurricanes and, with our ever changing climate, it is likely that these will impact Florida with greater intensity and frequency.”



## New course launched to meet need for international property experts



With the Chinese economy growing at a record 8% it will come as no surprise to discover that its land market is expanding at a rate to support that growth.

It's the same story in Eastern Europe where new commercial property markets are emerging that just weren't there ten years ago.

Few of these countries had expertise in real estate management, and, as a result, many UK-based firms have moved in with their expertise in growing demand. Many firms are basing more staff and offices overseas.

This process of globalisation is reflected in the company profiles in Target Property 2005, a current guide to careers in real estate. In the magazine, Jones Lang LaSalle says it operates "across more than 100 markets in 35 countries on five continents". DTZ says it has 1,500 employees in the UK, and 7,500 worldwide, while GVA Grimley states: "With around 4,000 people working at more than 80 international offices in 20 countries, we're formidable players in property markets around the world".

Our new MSc in International Real Estate has been set up in response to this worldwide trend, aiming to equip graduates with the skills and expertise they need to take advantage of career opportunities in these rapidly expanding overseas property markets. Of our first intake of 16 students, one-third come from the UK, with the remaining two-thirds are drawn from countries as diverse as Japan, the US, Russia and China.

It runs alongside its sister programme, which is based on the UK property market, but, as its name suggests, takes an international focus, looking at the key players in overseas markets and how investment works in different countries.

Both are conversion courses, and are built on a bedrock of research, in particular the Department's two specialist areas of international land markets and sustainability.

## More students opt for planning

"Figures show a hike in student intake" was the headline in Planning – the Journal of the Royal Town Planning Institute – on 17 September 2004.

The article reported major increases in the number of students taking up post-graduate planning courses this year at all of the major planning schools.

That 'hike' is nowhere more pronounced than at Oxford Brookes where over 100 students arrived in late September to start the new MSc in Spatial Planning.

Over half of these are part-time students sponsored by their employers while 13 of the full-time students came to the course as a result of successful applications for the highly competitive ODPM bursaries. These bursaries pay course fees for full-time students as well as a £6,000 subsistence allowance.

The changes made this year by the RTPi to its educational membership requirements – reducing the previous two year full-time course to one year – have clearly had a dramatic effect on the popularity of planning as an area of post-graduate study and as a profession and career path.

On top of the changes introduced by the RTPi came the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 with its emphasis on spatial planning. Spatial planning is a much more integrated approach to the control and development of land than traditional town and county planning.

A spatial approach to planning requires a much broader level of knowledge and understanding than traditional land use planning, and today's planners work alongside other built and natural environment professionals to deliver development that has at its heart the concept of sustainable living.



## Responding to the transport challenge

The election of the Labour government in 1997 signalled a change in approach to transport in the United Kingdom, says Charlotte Coleman, head of the popular MSc in Transport Planning, a subject that is playing an increasingly important role in the solving the sustainability equation.

"The new approach to transport seeks to improve the quality of public transport, encourage people to choose non-car modes for their journeys and to make a positive contribution to the environment and the wider sustainability agenda," she says. "The new transport agenda has brought new investment, new ideas and new challenges. The transport planning programme (MSc, Diploma and Certificate) at Brookes prepares students to tackle this new agenda and respond to the challenges ahead."

## Careers fair attracts major employers in property sector

The Surveying Careers Fair this autumn was the most successful so far with over 20 major employers attending.

Over 300 students met key employers, and discussed their future employment prospects with leading international property consultancies such as Chesterton, DTZ Debenham, Tie Leung, GVA Grimley, King Sturge and Knight Frank, all of whom sponsor our MSc Real Estate Management. Other major employers represented included Jones Lang LaSalle, Gerald Eve and Cluttons.

Sponsors have been involved in developing the programme of study, advising on content, and

providing work experience. In many instances this leads to employment for our graduates at the end of their year of study.

The MSc in Real Estate Management offers graduates from other disciplines the opportunity to enter the property profession. Graduates of the course are exempt from the academic entrance requirements for membership of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) and the vast majority of our graduates, totalling over 50 students, from the first 2 years of the course, are now completing their Assessment of Professional Competence in order to become fully qualified.



## Building better post-disaster housing

“People have often said to me, the problem with vernacular architecture is that you can’t do anything with it!. Except perhaps that the values inculcated in the study of the subject allow us to develop a process for creating appropriate and livable post-disaster housing.”

That is the view of Regina Lim, course coordinator of Natural Hazards and Environment.

“Understanding how different cultures live vis à vis their vernacular built form forms the very core of our Master’s in International Studies in Vernacular Architecture,” she says.

“To date, much post-disaster housing has made the people affected by the natural hazard into victims twice over: firstly of the actual natural hazard and secondly of the post-disaster housing they have had to live in.

“Post-disaster housing has proven inappropriate time and again because of its insensitivity to how different people from diverse cultures actually live.” In the study of vernacular architecture, methods for understanding culture and its implications on the built form are used to analyse how, and why, people construct their built environments.

Students gain awareness of local issues such as political and leadership systems, inheritance patterns and land distribution, as well as religion and belief systems.

“This knowledge is vital if post-disaster housing is to be carried out beyond the infrastructure project and is to be concerned with the actual well-being of people who have been left homeless by a disaster. To create homes that matter to the people, the process will need their participation in both the planning stages and the building process. Fundamental to this is the study of vernacular architecture in its cultural contexts, which is seriously overlooked at present,” says Regina.



Award-winning regeneration of Brixton’s Angell Town Estate. Community consultation facilitated by the Joint Centre for Urban Design. Photo credit: Regina Lim

## Humanitarian agencies face crisis in work in conflict areas

Humanitarian and development workers have a crucial role to play in helping in the recovery and rebuilding process in areas of conflict around the world.

However, as recent events in Iraq have demonstrated so starkly, their jobs are becoming increasingly dangerous as they themselves are now regarded as legitimate targets by some militant groups.

Military agencies have taken on many of the kind of humanitarian roles traditionally carried out by the aid agencies, causing the roles of the two to frequently overlap. As a consequence, groups opposed to a military presence often fail to distinguish between the two.

As a result, there is currently huge debate as to what the respective roles of the military and humanitarian agencies in conflict or disaster areas should be.

Médecins Sans Frontières recently pulled out of Afghanistan, fearful for the safety of its staff because the multinational military force occupying that country is also carrying out humanitarian duties.

Brian Phillips, human rights lecturer at Brookes, says this is one of many topical issues currently being addressed on the MA in Humanitarian and Development Practice. Humanitarianism has reached a critical point in its development, he says.

The new title of the Master’s course (it was formerly Development Practices) also reflects a changing emphasis within the field. Human rights and humanitarianism are now regarded as essential to studying and understanding the rebuilding process in areas that have suffered conflict.

The study of international human rights law is one key theme of the course, not just civil and political rights, but economic and social rights, too, which overlaps with the humanitarian agenda.

The MA draws a very varied and interesting mix of students, says Brian. Some are experienced field workers from agencies such as Oxfam or Save the Children, looking at gaining new insights to help them in their work. In contrast, others are working towards a change of career, often leaving the commercial world with a view to working for an NGO involved in humanitarian work.

Around a third of students are home based, with the rest of this year’s intake drawn from countries as varied as Zimbabwe, Sudan, Thailand, Mexico and Gambia. The year before included students from Sierra Leone, Vietnam, Kenya and Eritrea.

The course is continually evolving and changing to reflect events in the outside world. It tackles difficult issues such as ill treatment in police custody, political killing, and the right to water, food and adequate housing.

Brian stressed the interactive nature of the MA, in which students can learn from each other, as well as from lecturers who have experience themselves in the field. In addition, students carry out fieldwork overseas, in a country such as India or Bosnia.



## The School offers Master’s level courses in the following areas:

- Architecture
- Architecture and Cultural Studies
- Architecture in Regeneration
- Energy Efficient and Sustainable Building
- Environmental Assessment and Management
- Environmental Impact Assessment
- Environmental Management and Technology
- Health, Safety and Environmental Management
- Historic Conservation
- Humanitarian and Development Practice
- International Real Estate
- International Studies in Vernacular Architecture
- MBA (specialism in Real Estate and Construction)
- Planning Studies
- Real Estate Management
- Spatial Planning
- Tourism and Environmental Management
- Tourism Planning and Development
- Transport Planning
- Urban and Regional Regeneration
- Urban Design
- Urban Planning in Developing Countries

For more information on these courses email: [pgadmin.be@brookes.ac.uk](mailto:pgadmin.be@brookes.ac.uk) or telephone: +44 (0) 1865 483684

# The 2004 Ecohouse Competition:

The fourth International Ecohouse Competition was extremely well supported this year. 112 students from 34 countries sent in their excellent ecohouse designs in and the winners were as follows:

**1ST** Wang Yao, Li Yue, Zhou Jiali, Li ZhenJia - China

**2ND** Noelia Alchapar - Argentina

**3RD** Joint Diego Lorea, Julio Bariqelli, Emiliano De Marchi & Pablo Moneda – Argentina, Wang Ziwei - China, Ma Ling - China



# News

## Immigration and inclusion award



Professor Roger Zetter, who leads the Development and Forced Migration research cluster (DFM) in the School, has recently been awarded a prestigious Joseph Rowntree Foundation research award of £20,000 for a project entitled Immigration, Social Cohesion and Social Capital: What are the Links? This is one of four projects commissioned by the JRF to provide the building blocks for its new £1 million research programme on Immigration and Inclusion. For the DFM team this new project builds on recently completed research, valued at £155,000, for the ESRC on Refugee Community-Based Organisations: A Social Capital Analysis, and the European Commission Survey on Policy and Practice Related to Refugee Integration. The new work keeps the cluster in the forefront of research on migration, refugee and asylum policy and practice in Europe.

[[www.brookes.ac.uk/schools/planning/dfm](http://www.brookes.ac.uk/schools/planning/dfm)]

## Universol: PVs for Universities

Manuel Fuentes and Sue Roaf were responsible for Oxford Brookes' contribution - the web-site and project book - for Universol, an EU funded project which has just drawn to a close. Its key objective was to double the share of renewable energy in Europe by 2010 by installing a significant number of medium-large grid-connected PV systems in educational and cultural facilities in Spain, France, UK and the Netherlands. It has been a great success with over 3 megawatts installed on roofs of Green Campuses and Green Municipalities. If you would like to know more about the project contact Manuel on: [mfuentes@brookes.ac.uk](mailto:mfuentes@brookes.ac.uk)

## SARA project

The SARA project aims to construct sustainable, cost effective, high-energy performance, public-access eco-buildings that are immediately replicable at large scale in many locations. Eight eco-buildings will be built in different countries, equipped with advanced sustainable energy technologies and combined monitoring and building management systems. The project will contribute to the future development of European energy policy and legislation that will accelerate market penetration of innovative sustainable technologies. For more information contact: [mfuentes@brookes.ac.uk](mailto:mfuentes@brookes.ac.uk)



## EIA fails to protect vulnerable wildlife site

Major inconsistencies in the way Environmental Impact Assessments are carried out between different EU countries could lead to a failure to protect one of Europe's most important wildlife sites.

Recently completed research by the Department of Planning's Impacts Assessment Unit (IAU) has found major inconsistencies in the application of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Directive in the Wadden Sea region.

The Wadden Sea is one of Europe's most significant habitats and wildlife sites, running for some 500 km along the coasts of the Netherlands, Germany and Denmark. It is a highly dynamic shallow sea ecosystem with tidal channels, sands, mud flats, salt marshes, beaches, dunes and river mouths, and is also a transition zone to the North Sea.



The whole area is protected by numerous European and international wildlife conservation treaties, and is also a prospective World Heritage Site.

The IAU found that, despite a policy level commitment to the management of the Wadden Sea, there was no common approach to the operation of this key piece of EU environmental legislation.

The thresholds used to establish when an EIA should be required varied greatly between the three countries, with no clear evidence that a project that would require an EIA in one part of the Wadden Sea region would in another.

The three countries of the Wadden Sea – Germany, Netherlands and Denmark – originally entered into a trilateral policy agreement in the 1970s to manage the area as a single ecological entity, establishing the Common Wadden Sea Secretariat (CWSS) in 1987 for this trilateral co-operation.

The IAU's report highlighted the fact that the approach used by local authorities to consult with the public and with relevant bodies varied. The CWSS was rarely, if ever, consulted by the local authorities on the impacts of projects affecting the area. The IAU also discovered wide variation between the three countries in the number of EIAs completed in the region over the past five years. These findings suggest a lack of real commitment to harmonise the use of environmental policy tools for the long term management of the Wadden Sea.

## Conferences

With the growing interest in Ecohouses, Oxford Brookes is right at the forefront of the field with a best selling book, Ecohouse 2, the annual international student design competition, and the annual 'keep-up' conference. This year's **Ecohouse conference** takes place at RIBA in London on 26 January 2005. For more information email: [cce@brookes.ac.uk](mailto:cce@brookes.ac.uk) tel: 01865 4886906.

**A conference on Strategic Environmental Assessment: six months on** takes place at Oxford Brookes on Friday 28 January.

**Dr Jake Piper** is organising an Easter 2005 conference on **Integrating Planning for Land and Water**. Aimed at spatial planners, environmental consultants, NGO staff and statutory consultees, it will bring together new research, developments and issues in this important field, looking at whole catchment planning, participatory approaches and the impact of the Water Framework Directive.

**Liz Cairncross** is jointly organising the Housing Studies Association spring conference in York this year. For more information see: [www.york.ac.uk/inst/chp/hsa/spring05/index.html](http://www.york.ac.uk/inst/chp/hsa/spring05/index.html)

The Joint Centre for Urban Design at Oxford Brookes will be hosting a conference **Inspiring Public Spaces** on Monday 23 May.

## Short courses

On-going throughout the year

Wednesday 19 January

Friday 21 January

Friday 21 January

Wednesday 2 February

Wednesday 2 March

Wednesday 16 March

Wednesday 20 April

(date tbc)

7 April – 16 June

11 Thursday evening

teaching sessions

Strategic Environmental Assessment by Distance Learning

Introduction to the Planning Process (1 day)

Screening, Scoping & ES Review under the 1999 EIA Regulations (1 day)

This one-day short course aims to familiarise participants with ODPM requirements on sustainability appraisal (SA) and the European Directive on strategic environmental assessment (SEA).

Introduction to Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment (1 day)

Planning: Rural Transport and Accessibility: 5 linked day sessions:

The Distinctiveness of Rural Areas  
Accessibility Planning in Rural Areas  
Local and community transport  
Rural roads and traffic management  
Planning and the Water Framework

Certificate in Environmental Assessment Procedures & Process

Training and updating in the skills, techniques, procedures and processes of Environmental Assessment aimed at those who work in planning and related fields.

Please visit our CPD website to find out about these and other short courses and conferences:

[www.brookes.ac.uk/schools/be/planning/shortcourses](http://www.brookes.ac.uk/schools/be/planning/shortcourses), or email: Karen Hughes, Short Course Co-ordinator [khughes@brookes.ac.uk](mailto:khughes@brookes.ac.uk) Telephone: +44 (0) 1865 483560

**Professor Roger Zetter's** latest book *Market Economy and Urban Change: Impacts in the Developing World* was published by Earthscan in October. Jointly edited with Dr Mohamed Hamza, a former researcher with Roger Zetter, the book explores and evaluates urban sector and development policies in the context of market enablement and the associated instruments of structural adjustment, urban management reform and 'good' governance which are widespread across the developing world. With case studies drawn from countries such as Egypt, Mexico, Kenya, Brazil and Colombia, the book focuses in particular on the implications for land, shelter and related sectoral policies for poverty alleviation. Linking policy to practice, the book aims to inform policy makers in governments, and donor and implementing agencies, of the impact of shifts in the development debate on urban sector strategies.

**Professor Nabeel Hamdi** (Department of Architecture) has just published *Small Change* (Earthscan). He explains the concept of Small Change: "Build a bus stop in an urban slum and a vibrant community sprouts and grows around it – that is the power of small changes that can have huge positive effects."

The book argues for the wisdom of the street, the ingenuity of the improvisers and the long-term, large-scale effectiveness of immediate, small-scale actions. Described as 'the guru of urban participatory development and the master of the art', Hamdi brings over three decades of experience and knowledge to bear on the question 'what is practice?'. Through an easy-to-read narrative style, and using examples from the North and South, the author sheds light on this question and the issues that stem from it – issues relating to political context, the lessons of the 'informal city', and the pursuit of learning that challenges convention.

*Closing the Loop: Benchmarks for Sustainable Buildings* by **Sue Roaf, with Andrew Horsley and Rajat Gupta** (Department of Architecture)

was published in June 2004 by RIBA Enterprises and is selling very well. It explains clearly what sustainability in buildings might be and how to measure it. It covers issues varying from corporate social responsibility and quality of life, to air and water quality and land use. A section on the post



occupancy evaluation of buildings is designed to ensure that benchmarks are used regularly to ensure that building performance improves over time.

**Sue Roaf, David Crichton and Fergus Nicol** (Department of Architecture) have produced a challenging new book that questions whether modern architecture constitutes a major part of the climate change problem rather than part of its solution. They call for a major change in the way we teach, design and build in the face of the scale of the problems ahead such as climate change and fossil fuel depletion. *Adapting Buildings and Cities for Climate Change*, published by Architectural Press, Oxford, looks set to cause a stir and should be read by all those involved in the built environment, say the authors.



**Dr Nicholas Walliman** (Department of Architecture) has just published a new book aimed at helping undergraduate students with their dissertations. A compact and easy-to-read guide, it covers all the essential facets of dissertation writing at undergraduate level. It includes advice on preparing a project and choosing a topic, and on choosing and implementing appropriate methodology. It gives guidelines on writing a project proposal and

producing a literature review, as well as methods of data collection and analysis. It also raises awareness of the philosophy of research and ethical issues. Dr Walliman is author of the best selling book 'Your Research Project: A step-by-step guide for the first-time researcher', aimed at postgraduate research students. *Your Undergraduate Dissertation: the essential guide for success (2004)* is published by Sage, London, price £12.99.

**Tim Marshall** (Department of Planning) has just published *Transforming Barcelona*. Barcelona is perhaps the European city that has become most renowned for successfully "remaking" itself over the last 20 years. This image has been spread cumulatively round the world through books, television, the web, films and even the use of the city in advertisements. This book examines the reality behind that image. It describes how the governors, professional planners and architects, and in a wider sense the people of Catalonia, have brought about the succession of changes which began in around 1980. Tim Marshall, who has worked in planning since the mid 1970s, has been visiting Barcelona throughout those changes.



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