

Delivering Sustainable Regeneration Conference 2/3/06

Session 2 - Planning Guidance for Sustainable Development

Alan Simpson, MP for Nottingham South

Speech – notes

- Sustainable homes may be the only way we can live coherently throughout the country but will require a huge shift in the way we think.
- The way we are behaving now is criminal! We are in effect stealing from our children and grandchildren who will have to pay massively for our actions in the future.
- We have to change our whole mindset regarding the built environment and our place in it.
- We need driven change
 - Driven by obligations
 - Driven by set benchmarks
- Example: In Ontario, Canada air conditioning is being phased out in favour of a system, which uses water abstracted from the bottom of Lake Ontario, which is then circulated.
- We must look to systems such as this to help limit our impact on the climate change.
- At a recent conference with the building developer sector it was suggested that building regulations should be changed so that the developer is responsible for 50% of the energy cost for the development for the first 10 years. With early integration at the design stage developments can be created with current technology, which incorporate self-energy generation, which will not only save money but make money! All we need is the motivation to execute it.
- A revolution is taking place and it is not being driven by central parliament but from outside, from NGOs, innovative business and design.
- We need to think about not just energy but energy systems and our place in them not only as energy consumers but also as energy generators.
- Example – City of London's pledge to reach 50% self-energy generation by 2010, an initiative is underway to get 20 of the world's largest cities to do the same.

- Ecohomes also recycle water. Water resources are becoming an increasing worry as flash flooding continues to devastate parts of the world.
- In an attempt to deal with this issue some cities of the world are demanding that developers incorporate reservoirs in their foundations to compensate for the loss of soak away land that has been caused by the development.
- There are many innovative opportunities to deal with the mounting importance of sustainable development and the UK is already lagging behind much of the world.
- Our current energy system is extremely inefficient and gains could be made from decentralised energy supplies.
- Example – Local area energy systems connecting residential centres with commercial centres.
- All of these initiatives require us to embrace the vision of sustainable development and set benchmarks that will not tolerate inadequately designed developments.
- 167 cities in the United States have already independently signed up to the Kyoto treaty.
- There is a global momentum for change and we need to be a part of it so our children will thank us rather than criticise us.