

Ten Parishes Environment Group

ON 13th September, members of the Ten Parishes Environment Group visited the residential waterfront development at Great Bow Yard in Langport and the Genesis Project at Somerset College for Arts and Technology (SCAT) in Taunton to find out more about environmentally sensitive sustainable development.

Great Bow Yard in the heart of Langport is a unique residential development in that it puts environmental considerations to the fore in the design and construction techniques employed.

The developers, South West Eco-Homes Ltd, gave a brief to some of the region's leading architects as part of a competition to come up with a design that met stringent sustainability criteria, to create a healthy living space, reduce carbon emissions and water consumption, use recycled or sustainable local construction materials and make a positive contribution to the local economy.

The development is therefore future proofing itself against the political pressures and fiscal measures likely to be making all these initiatives mandatory in the future.

The development is to be completed in two phases, the first, which is almost complete, is the construc-

tion of 12 new houses and apartments catering for all sectors of the local population, young and old as well as growing families.

The second phase is the restoration of the waterfront warehouse and wharf into a community of small business units, shops and restaurant, bringing renewed life to the building.

SCAT has long been at the forefront of building technology and renewable energy for a while now, evident to anyone driving past on the way into Taunton, so it is no surprise that the Genesis Centre project, which was launched by Kevin McCloud of Channel 4's Grand Designs programme, came into being to demonstrate many different techniques and materials for sustainable construction.

The series of pavilions are constructed of earth, straw, clay and timber, with living roofs, and a water pavilion demonstrating the latest water-saving devices.

The design is flexible and has the ability to stay leading edge by demolishing pavilions when they have served their purpose and replacing them with new designs and materials.

The pavilions will be monitored for their performance and their results displayed so that different materials and construction techniques can be measured against industry standards and against each other to assess appropriateness of use.

The building is to be heated through a biomass

boiler, fed by waste timber from the woodworking courses held at SCAT, a real recycling effort that meets the proximity principle for the re-use of waste materials.

The waste timber is going to be made into pellets to automatically feed the boiler (SCAT's wood workshops generate sufficient wood waste to provide 20% of Genesis' fuel requirement).

Another innovative technique relates to the roof coverings. Genesis is keen to address surface water run-off so they have looked at living roof systems and a rubble roof again using construction waste off the site. These provide a beneficial environment for biodiversity and absorbing rainwater rather than sending it all to the sustainable drainage systems.

The Ten Parishes Environment Group is committed to getting sustainable building practices into as many of our public and private buildings as possible. The visit to the Great Bow Yard and the Genesis Project proved that it is possible.

Nick Leaney, chairman of the group, said: "What a tremendous opportunity we have to develop the 10 Parishes into a truly sustainable environment which seeks to not only talk about being green but act green."

"The community in Langport and students at SCAT showed how it can be done and we should take their lead."

Maundown water treatment works reconstruction



WESSEX Water for the second time recently invited local people to find out the latest about its prestigious £25m rebuild of Maundown water treatment works.

An exhibition of the latest plans was held in Wiveliscombe Community Centre in October to help tackle issues raised by local residents and attracted nearly 50 local people.

"It was very positive day," said Wessex Water's project manager Richard Thackeray. "Local people were very interested in how the plans had progressed, and were able to give us some further good feedback for ensuring this work is completed with the interests of local people at heart."

The exhibition is the second of its kind, and aimed to keep residents in the vicinity of the proposed works up to speed with progress. It was also designed to help them understand what will happen, when and how the work will be carried out.

At the exhibition, members of the project team were again present to talk to visitors and explain how feedback from the first exhibition in July has been used to further develop the scheme.

The increased number of treatment processes will be housed in two new buildings, and these will set down into the site as much as possible.

To further reduce the visual impact, a 'green' roof is being proposed, where the metal roof is covered with a growing medium and planted with sedum plants.

These are very low maintenance, hardy plants which are able to endure extremes of climate. Visitors were able to see a sample of this at the exhibition.

Generally, the plans were well received and Wessex Water is work now preparing supporting documents ahead of an application for planning permission to Taunton Deane Council in early December.

Construction work is planned to start in summer 2006, with the rebuilding of the works due to be completed by 2009. There will then be a period where both the old and new works operate together, before the old works will be taken out of service, demolished and the area landscaped.

Wessex Water aims to ensure any disturbance and environmental impact caused during the construction

Business units to let

IN the last Messenger an advertisement offered 800 sq/ft - 2000sq/ft Business Starter units 'soon to be available' on the Station Road Industrial Estate in Wiveliscombe.

This represented a real breakthrough. There has been a shortage of starter units in the town for a good number of years.

W H Hendy/Brendon Powerwashers, who own and operate their businesses from units on the industrial estate, are looking to move to two new, larger factory units on land at Hillsmoor, the far side of the Grampian pig processing factory.

On November 2nd Taunton Deane planners approved their planning application but, because the southern part of the site is not allocated for employment use on the Taunton Deane Local Plan, the application has had to be referred to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister for approval.

Once the approval is given and the new buildings are completed and taken over, it is anticipated that nearly all of the units on the Station Road Estate will be available to rent.

In the meantime anyone interested in the units which are available at the moment are asked to contact Alan Hendy on 01984 623386.

Volunteers wanted

WOULD you like to make thirty new friends immediately? Why not volunteer to be a cook at Wiveliscombe Day Centre in the Community Hall for one Monday each month.

Two volunteers are also sought for washing up duties for a couple of hours.

Additionally we have a team of volunteer drivers who pick up our elderly and housebound members; we also need people to cover for occasional driver absences. A petrol allowance will be paid.

If any of the above appeal please call in any Monday between 10-2.30pm or call Jean Holland 01984 624232.

work is kept to a minimum.

The works, which was built in the 1960s and extended in the early 1970s, treats water from the nearby Wimbleball and Clatworthy reservoirs and supplies around 200,000 people in central Somerset.

Wessex Water is investing £25m to upgrade the water treatment facilities, improve the quality of drinking water and meet increased demand for water in the area.

The project has the support of the Drinking Water Inspectorate, the government organisation responsible for regulating public water supplies in England and Wales.

More information on the scheme is available from project manager Richard Thackeray, Wessex Water, Claverton Down, Bath BA2 7WW, telephone: 01225 526000 or e-mail Richard.thackeray@wessexwater.co.uk

New play area opens

IN October Mary Whitmarsh officially opened the new children's play area at the Rec.

She spoke a few opening words, and then, on cue, five youngsters of the parish raced through the opening ribbon and, breaking it, release balloons in celebration. The balloons, however, were tethered, and the kids were able to take them home.

This happy event was the culmination of three years of hard work under the direction of the Rec Committee.

Its chairman, Bryn Wilson, reports that £69,000 was raised from many sources, which included grants from the Lottery, TDBC, Wyvern Waste, and Living Space. The Rec Committee itself contributed £2,500 from carefully husbanded reserves.

The co-ordinator of the fundraising effort, and the motivating force behind it, was Jenny Carey-Wood. Her skill at extracting cash from all sources has become legendary.

Nick Forth worked on design and purchasing, and Bryn himself undertook supervision of ground preparation and the installation of equipment, all of which conforms to the highest safety standards.

It is important to note, too, that design features for disabled people, and suitable access, has been provided to enable all children to enjoy the new play structures.

Other members of the Rec Committee also put in a great deal of time and effort to ensure the success of the venture.

Bungalows progressing well

THE supported bungalows by the Primary School, for persons either over 55 or disabled, living in Wiveliscombe or the nearby villages, are progressing well.

By mid November the roads and car park are tarmaced, all of the bungalows are started, some are shortly to be roofed.

The completion date is set for May 11th with the possibility of some being handed over to Magna Housing Corporation before if the weather allows.

No one has been allocated a bungalow yet but Magna will be seeking nominations from Taunton Deane Housing Dept, who are handling the applications, in the New Year.

In October Magna made a bid to the

Housing Corporation for funding to build twenty affordable dwellings on a site to the north of the town. They expect a response in March.

Should they be successful they plan a residential development of 7x3bedroom houses, 9x2 bedroom houses and 4x1 bedroom flats, in line with the findings of the Housing Needs Survey conducted last February.

Most of these dwellings will be to rent, a few will be shared equity, part mortgage part rent.

There will be fuller details in the April Messenger if the funding decision is favourable and a planning application has been made. These dwellings will also be for local people.

Helena Trump

for

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