



Eco Open Houses 2015

PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE PUBLICATION

Eco Open Houses launch opens doors to a sustainable future

- Cllr Gill Mitchell, chair of Brighton & Hove City Council's Environment, Transport and Sustainability Committee, opened this year's event on Monday 12th October.
- Eco Open Houses Brighton & Hove will be running 17-18 and 24-25 October showcasing properties across the city
- The event features 13 properties; 2 new houses opening for the first time and 5 with zero-carbon rating.

Sustainable, energy efficient homes remain the future of housing: that's the message this year's Eco Open Houses Launch put forward.

Taking place in Brighton and Hove and the surrounding areas, the event begins this weekend on 17-18 and 24-25 October. It showcases some of the most sustainable, money saving homes across the city.

Councillor Gill Mitchell opened the event on Monday at 57 Grantham Road, Brighton, one of the city's growing number of zero carbon houses. The property generates all of its energy, including energy for heating, hot water, lighting and appliances, without adding carbon dioxide to the atmosphere.

Visitors to the launch were shown the property's money saving features: an air source heat pump, solar photovoltaics, rainwater harvesting and underfloor heating, but were also impressed by the building's contemporary design and peaceful garden, a hidden secret off busy Ditchling road.

Cllr Mitchell underlined the importance of the event in promoting environmentally minded, money saving home improvements locally saying:

"The Eco Open Houses weekends is a very popular local event. Visiting the properties, and talking to the owners taking part, is a great way to get ideas and inspiration for making your home more environmentally-friendly, and cut energy bills at the same time."

Also in attendance were Brighton and Hove's city planning manager Rob Fraser, and Liz Hobden Local Development Team Manager.

Homeowners Malcolm and Linda Kemp, who just this year completed their six year journey building and designing the property in collaboration with local firms R and R Builders and Deacon and Richardson architects, are taking part in the Eco Open Houses for the first time. Having attended the Eco Open Houses in past years, the couple found it very helpful in realising the full potential of their dream home.

Other properties taking part in this year's event include:

- The office that used to be a toilet block; featuring ground floor insulation, food growing, rainwater collection and recycled furniture.
- The award winning Earthship Brighton community centre made out of old car tyres rammed with earth. It generates its own solar energy for heat and power, and treats sewage on site.
- The internationally renowned and award winning Waste House at the University of Brighton, made almost entirely out of waste, including old denim and thousands of toothbrushes, will be open to the public throughout the event.
- Brighton Permaculture Trust's Fruit Factory, a strawbale retrofit of a tractor shed set to revolutionise scrumping of local fruit.

The public are invited to a talk on low-energy Passivhaus construction, featuring a Passivhaus refurbishment in Totnes. Passivhaus is an internationally recognized standard for comfortable low energy buildings.

Mischa Hewitt, Director of the Low Carbon Trust, said:

"Eco Open Houses 2015 demonstrates that building sustainably is easily achievable in all of the houses in Brighton & Hove show householders, communities and businesses how it can be done."

Full details of Brighton & Hove Eco Open Houses, including how to book tours of the eco homes, open house visiting times and the seminar programme, can be found in the 2015 brochure, which can be downloaded from www.ecoopenhouses.org.

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Editors' notes

- Eco Open Houses is an annual collaborative project run by [Low Carbon Trust](http://www.lowcarbon.co.uk), [Brighton Permaculture Trust](http://www.brightonpermaculturetrust.org) and [Brighton & Hove City Council](http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk).
- Low Carbon Trust (www.lowcarbon.co.uk) is an independent, not-for-profit organisation formed in 2001 to set up, manage and promote environmental projects; Brighton Permaculture Trust promotes greener lifestyles and sustainable development through design.

For more information, or if you would like to attend, contact:

Rebecca Freeman

Low Carbon Trust

Telephone number: 07412985105 tweet @EcoOpenHouses #EcoOpenHouses2015

Email address: rebecca.freeman@lowcarbon.co.uk