

Action Surrey Press Release

Release Date: For immediate release

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Surrey Green Homes Open Days 26-27 March 2011

On Saturday 26th and Sunday 27th March, 29 homeowners throughout Surrey will open their doors to the public to share their knowledge and experience about making their own homes more energy efficient and ecologically sustainable. Homeowners will be able to report on how these changes have affected their fuel bills, and the comfort of their homes.

This County-wide event will mark the launch of Action Surrey, a new local Council partnership scheme designed to help homeowners save energy in the home and install renewable technology.

Ben Wood, project manager for Action Surrey added *"this is a great opportunity to speak to homeowners who have been-there-and-done-it. Many of these individuals have installed solar panels, heat pumps, insulated their properties as well as they can, and explored other innovate ways to save energy. This is set to be a brilliant event made possible by passionate individuals who want to share their experience."*

Colin Butfield, Head of Campaigns at the global environment charity WWF said *"WWF is pleased to see so many green homes opening their doors to inspire others"*.

He added *"As the owner of a retrofitted home, I know firsthand the benefits of making your property more energy efficient. Although retrofitting your property might initially seem like a daunting prospect it is vital that we see this happen across the nation not only to ensure we significantly reduce our carbon emissions but also to support the UK economy as it starts to rebuild with genuinely low carbon bricks! If we are to truly achieve our goal of a sustainable future for all then we need to inspire and empower people to take action such as greening their homes."*

Viewing a Surrey Green Home is free but booking is strictly required. Please visit www.actionsurrey.org/surreygreenhomes to find out more and book free tickets. Unfortunately children under 14 cannot be permitted and pets are not allowed.

Surrey Green Homes is a joint initiative of Action Surrey and environmental volunteer groups including all Transition Towns across Surrey, Guildford Environment Forum, Epsom & Ewell Energy Group and Woking LA21.

Action Surrey is funded by the Surrey Improvement Partnership and the eco-open homes event is supported by ICLEI, a network of sustainable cities operating worldwide to raise awareness of saving energy and other environmental challenges.

For further information about Action Surrey or the eco open homes event please visit

www.actionsurrey.org
www.actionsurrey.org/surreygreenhomes

Notes to editor:

- Approximately 27% of the UK's carbon emissions come from the private housing stock

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- 80% of the existing housing stock will be still standing in 2050 so making these houses more energy efficient is a key priority, more so than new build.
- Action Surrey is a local Council partnership scheme designed to help homeowners save energy in the home and install renewable technology. It is funded by the Surrey Improvement Partnership. This event will mark the launch of this project.
- ICLEI is a global network of local governments all sharing information to combat environmental issues cooperatively. <http://www.iclei-europe.org/about-iclei/>
- WWF are a global environmental organisation campaigning for a more sustainable way of life. Part of this campaigning raises awareness about how we need to reduce energy consumption in the home, as part of making the existing UK housing stock more energy efficient http://www.wwf.org.uk/what_we_do/campaigning/one_planet_homes/
- Photos are available of all points of interest raised in the press release

Key features of an eco home may include:

- Energy saving through increased thermal performance
- Saving fossil fuels through use of renewable energy
- Energy saving through passive solar design and/or designing out high energy maintenance requirements
- Overall increase of on-site surface water attenuation
- Re-use of water (grey water recycling), rainwater harvesting, and/or increased water efficiency measures
- Site waste management, including minimisation of construction waste, reclaim, recycle and reuse of demolition waste and construction waste.
- Material selection from recycled materials, locally sourced, locally manufactured products
- Material selection from natural products, low embodied energy, and sustainably sourced materials
- Use of local consultants, contractors and labour in design and implementation of the changes

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