



# Sustainable Construction CPD

## Module 8/15

### Sustainable Construction Drivers

CPD Programme by Gaia Research: Info from 0131 558 7227 and [www.gaiagroup.org](http://www.gaiagroup.org)

#### Sustainable Building Design

Achieving sustainability requires us to live within the limits of the earth's capacity to provide the materials for our activities and to absorb the waste and pollution that our activities generate.

The construction, fit out, operation and ultimate demolition of buildings is a huge factor in human impact on the environment both directly; through material and energy consumption and the consequent pollution and waste, and indirectly, through the pressures on often inefficient infrastructure.

There is already a significant amount of information available to all professions on how to design buildings that are attentive to the needs of sustainable construction. But, most practice still falls radically short of applying even the most easily applicable principles in most projects. Opportunities that could bring real advantage are being missed every day. The result is that buildings and the industries which supply building designers with products, materials and services are less efficient, less economical and more polluting than they might otherwise be.

This module aims to highlight the key concerns, initiatives and events which are driving debate in the UK towards a culture of sustainable construction and to provide an introduction to the sources of contemporary guidance and debate.

Whilst there remains considerable discussion about what it is, and whilst not everyone considers it to be important, sustainable construction is now a significant part of local, national and European legislation and policy. The information provided here is based on a literature review. It aims through a discussion of motives, and facts to debunk myths about sustainability and to provide a basis for debate on the future of the issues and how best to implement a culture which for want of an alternative might best be described as 'betterism'.

Better jobs, better homes, better communities, better decision making, better air, better food, better water, better futures.

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*The choice is simple. We can have sustainable development, unsustainable development or no development at all?*  
Sandy Halliday Build Green Seminar 1990

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#### Continuous Professional Development

This CPD module is produced at the mid-point, in a series which will summarise the existing sources of best practice guidance on sustainable building design. These modules do not seek to repeat what other documents contain, except to summarise the most important issues.

Each module provides information on critical aspects of a particular topic and sources of further guidance by way of an annotated bibliography. Case studies are intended to provide depth, to improve understanding and encourage implementation of sustainable design solution. Each module is supplemented by seminars to provide opportunity to discuss design projects in interdisciplinary groups with peers and specialists.

It is hoped that the modules will act as a catalyst in the creation of distance learning opportunities and allow participants to share information on live design projects with their own and other professions.

#### Objectives

By the end of this module, readers should be able to:

- Understand the history of ideas that have motivated individuals and organisations to achieve improving environmental, social and financial performance on construction projects;
- Understand the local and global events that are driving the sustainable construction agenda
- Understand and access the networks that are helping practitioners to deliver an improved built environment.
- Understand that there is much guidance that can help to deliver a sustainable construction approach.
- Understand the fundamental motives for:
  - > improving indoor environments
  - > consulting communities
  - > improving energy efficiency
  - > preventing water pollution
  - > preventing air pollution
  - > preventing land pollution
  - > effective waste management
  - > protection of wildlife



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Top Left: Sustainable development model used in community consultation to synthesise top down, bottom up, local and global issues.  
Bottom Left: Newspaper headline Florida February 2002 "Growing recognition of toxicity of timber treatments and future liabilities have led to a ban on CCA treatment".