

"If you want to change the world, you must begin from where you are"
Roger Budgeon, Founder, Greenshop



PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
17 April 2008

A natural beauty: The Greenshop Group moves to its new building, designed by award-winning eco architects Architype

Over the course of November and December 2007, the Greenshop Group moved into its new building designed by award-winning eco architects Architype. The Greenshop, which has been promoting and selling environmental products for over 20 years, has invested in the new building as a way of bringing together key staff from its five businesses – the Greenshop (supplying the UK's largest range of eco paints), Auro Paints, Consolar UK, Greenshop Solar and Rainharvesting Systems Ltd.

Since 1987, Roger Budgeon has been pioneering selling environmental products from his petrol station in Bisley, Stroud, Gloucestershire. Holbrook Garage (to which the Greenshop is attached) was the first forecourt in Gloucestershire to sell unleaded petrol and LPG and the first forecourt in the UK to sell blended bio-diesel.

The Greenshop Group encompasses a philosophy that environmental thinking should run through every strand of the business. The Greenshop only sells products that have a genuine environmental value: Auro Paints has been voted 'Favourite Ethical (DIY) Product' by readers of *Ethical Consumer* magazine; Rainharvesting Systems provides rainwater harvesting systems for public buildings and new builds (past projects have included the RSPB building at Rainham Marshes and Adnams Brewery, Suffolk); Greenshop Solar focuses on solar hot-water systems and photovoltaic energy systems and is the UK distributor for Consolar, a leading producer of solar equipment and thermal stores.

The Greenshop's new building is open for visitors and there is information available to find out exactly how the premises and workspaces have been built and fitted out. Various sustainable building techniques include: biomass (log) and solar thermal heating (a thermal store which supplies heat energy to the building); photovoltaic solar panels on the roof producing electricity; green and brown roofs; a rainwater harvesting system (the original Greenshop has had a rainwater collection system in place since 1994); natural insulation from Thermafleecel and Warmcel; interior decorated with natural paints and finishes; natural lighting and ventilation solutions; flooring made from oak, bamboo and recycled tyre carpet, and re-use of earth materials during the process of the build. Externally, the Greenshop will have landscaped grounds featuring natural ponds and flow-forms.

One of the aspects of the new build is that the building can act as an education centre as well as the home of the Greenshop and its associated businesses. Over the course of 2008 and into 2009, the Greenshop will have open days for individuals, businesses, schools and colleges and suppliers so that people can find out the latest in environmental technologies and construction methods.

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“Our hope is that the building becomes a beacon of how work premises can be designed for future-proofing and working with the environment, not despite it,” says Roger Budgeon. “An example is that our rainwater harvesting system supplies more than 80 per cent of our water use. In times of water crisis, such as the Gloucestershire floods of 2007, our rainwater gave us resilience against the water supply failure which meant that the business could remain open. This not only makes environmental sense from a self-sufficiency point of view but also makes commercial sense. We want to pass on our knowledge so that others can benefit from the technologies that we have been putting in place.”

Jonathan Hines, architect, says: “Architype is delighted to have been involved with this exciting project and to work with such a committed client. Our approach was to design from first principles a building that is truly sustainable, works at a practical level and enables the Greenshop to demonstrate its philosophy and products.”

The Greenshop works with many Gloucestershire and surrounding area businesses on ‘greening’ their offices and premises. It also works with individuals who are retrofitting their homes and Roger Budgeon is a very active parish councilor as well as being an invited member of Stroud District Council’s ‘Climate Change Panel’.

The Greenshop currently employs 55 local Gloucestershire people and has a turnover of £3.75 million.

EDITOR’S NOTE: For more information, product or site photographs, contact Jane Powell at jane@greenshop.co.uk or 01452 770629 or 07765851258 or Roger Budgeon at roger@greenshop.co.uk or 01452 772090.

NOTES FOR EDITORS:

- The Greenshop Group (www.greenshopgroup.co.uk) includes:
- The Greenshop: www.greenshop.co.uk
- Rainharvesting Systems Ltd: www.rainharvesting.co.uk
- Greenshop Solar Ltd: www.greenshopsolar.co.uk
- Consolar UK: www.consolar.co.uk
- Auro UK: www.auro.co.uk
- Holbrook Garage: www.holbrook-garage.co.uk

FACTS ABOUT THE GREENSHOP’S ECO-BUILD TECHNIQUES:

- A **rainwater harvesting** system works in the following way: large tanks are either buried underground (or hidden away). They store water in the dark below 18°C, which prevents algal growth and they have lids to prevent debris falling into them, or to cause a danger to people. The rainwater is collected and stored for re-use later. The water is ideal for everyday use except for drinking, cooking and bathing (unless treated further). Water is released down the drain or into the land gradually (acting as a storm

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water retention system) as it is re-used. It is an ideal way of cutting down mains water usage, making homes or companies more self-sufficient as well as saving money.

- The car workshop at the Greenshop has a rainwater collecting system for flushing toilets and pressure washing of cars and the workshop is **heated by a waste product - waste oil**.
- At the front of the building, **green and brown roofs** absorb and retain falling rainwater, releasing it slowly over a long period. Green and brown roofs have the various benefits of helping storm water control (ie. water seeps out slowly over a long period), they provide a replacement of natural habitat and they also provide good insulation, especially keeping the building cool in summer.
Roger and his team will be watching how the rainwater collected from the green and brown roofs differs in terms of rainwater harvesting, as this is still a relatively new technology.
- **Natural paints** are used throughout the Greenshop's new building. The Greenshop stocks the largest range of ecological paints and wood finishes in the UK. The paint catalogue is free of charge and includes: Auro Natural Paints, Green Paints, EarthBorn Claypaints and Lime Earth.
- The new building operates **wind and solar-charged battery systems supplying energy** for use in the shop and a grid-connected photovoltaic system on the roof. This means the building uses less energy from the National Grid and any surplus produced can be fed back into the Grid.
- The heating system uses **solar thermal collectors** and a **log boiler** into a **thermal store** which, in turn, supplies heat to the under-floor heating and the hot water.
- The building has **bamboo** and **oak flooring** and a **recycled tyre carpet** in the entrance. Environmental benefits of using bamboo flooring is that bamboo is a fast-growing, plentiful supply, long-lasting and easy to clean product. Recycled tyre flooring is also hard-wearing, ideal for locations where there is plenty of footfall and uses what would otherwise be seen as a 'waste product', which is now banned from landfill. The first floor offices are floored in oak.
- **The Greenshop** website covers aspects of the new build in more detail and visitors are always welcome. www.greenshopgroup.co.uk

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