

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



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The Greenshop's new eco-building: is this the greenest shop in the UK?

On Wednesday 23rd April 2008, the Greenshop Group opened its new building in a launch ceremony with a speech by Jonathon Porritt CBE, Chair of the Sustainable Development Commission, board member of the South West of England Regional Development Agency and founder director of Forum for the Future. Also in attendance were David Drew MP; Roger Budgeon, founder/owner; Greenshop Group staff, and over 200 invited guests.

The launch was to showcase the new building for the Greenshop Group, designed by award-winning eco architects, Architype.

The Greenshop is one of the UK's longest standing eco-retailers. It has been pioneering sales of environmental products for over 20 years. The Greenshop Group consists of: the Greenshop retail and mail order business; Auro Paints (one of the UK's largest suppliers of natural paints); Rainharvesting Systems Ltd, a UK leader in rainharvesting systems; Consolar UK (distributor for solar collectors, heat stores and control equipment from Consolar in Germany); Greenshop Solar, providing businesses and private individuals with solar hot-water systems and photovoltaic (PV) energy systems, and Holbrook Garage, the first garage in Gloucestershire to sell unleaded petrol.

The new Greenshop building is designed to be as low energy as possible, making the most of water, solar power and other natural resources. Roger Budgeon's ethos is that: "If you want to change the world, you must begin from where you are". The latest building is designed as a way of showcasing latest technologies in a way that the general public can see how the systems work – from recycled rubber, bamboo and FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) flooring, green and brown roofs, rainwater harvesting, solar PV and solar thermal systems, log boiler and underfloor heating, natural paints, various types of insulation, wall materials, window and door fittings, low-energy lighting and low-flush toilets.

Every aspect of the building has been thought out to be as environmentally-friendly and eco-efficient as possible at the time of construction. "We set out to build a new building that would have a low impact on the surrounding

landscape and to show what can be achieved by making buildings as environmentally efficient as possible,” says Roger Budgeon.

The building is being constantly monitored and results are being made available through the Greenshop Group website so that other interested parties and businesses can see the progress the Greenshop is making.

“Our aim is to share knowledge with others, which is fundamental to the Greenshop’s philosophy,” says Roger. “We already work with many businesses and individuals in the Gloucestershire and surrounding counties, and, indeed, around the UK. The new building marks a very exciting moment for the Greenshop and we want to be able to share, as much as possible, with others about what is working and what isn’t.”

Jonathon Porritt, who opened the building, said that he was very pleased to be visiting the Greenshop again (he launched the original Greenshop building 10 years ago). “Coming here is a ‘fix’ for me,” he said. “I spend so much time lobbying government and trying to get government policy to change and move forward. The wheels of government move very slowly indeed and the Greenshop gives us the injection of enthusiasm that we need. Roger Budgeon believes that we learn by doing and he is one of the change makers in the environmental movement in the UK. He is a ‘doer’ and he is always inspiring. He is also now employing a large staff base, all of whom are learning about the environmental technologies that the Greenshop supplies. We need this in the UK, and we need it urgently. We have to bring our skills base up to match the possibilities of environmental technologies. This has to happen fast and the Greenshop is a great example of where this is truly taking place.”

David Drew MP also spoke of how the Greenshop looks at “the feasibility, the vision and the reality” of working with environmental technologies. He said that Greenshop staff are “the people to talk to” when it comes to environmental initiatives and that the Greenshop is “an exemplar of all the best things about environmental business in the UK”.

Following the launch on Wednesday 23rd April, the Greenshop also opened its doors for ‘behind-the-scenes’ tours for the public on Saturday 26th April. The response from the public was phenomenal with Roger Budgeon saying that: “We started earlier than I expected, had more visitors than I had imagined and went on longer than I expected. We were still doing tours at 6.30pm!” Surely a good omen for the building and spreading the environmental word?

More Public Open Days at the Greenshop will be organised through 2008. If you would like more information, register for the Greenshop’s newsletter through www.greenshop.co.uk or call 01452 770629. For in-depth information about the new building’s technologies, visit www.greenshopgroup.co.uk.

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Open from 9am-7pm Monday to Friday, 9am-6pm Saturday and 9.30am-1pm on Sunday
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