

# EXCELLENCE

the South East Excellence e-newsletter

## STRATEGY IN PARTNERSHIP: the future of regional governance

Following the closure of the South East England Regional Assembly in March, the South East England Partnership Board has been set up to bring the region's local authorities and the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) together to create a new regional strategy. Once approved, it will replace the South East Plan and Regional Economic Strategy (RES).

[Read more here.](#)

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## CAREER START



One of the biggest risks to the recovery of the built environment sector is a shortage of skills as those at risk of redundancy or those who have been made redundant seek new careers outside the industry and graduates, unable to get a job, look elsewhere. While the pressure is on employers to keep headcounts down, there are a number of schemes in place to encourage work placements for graduates or retraining for those facing redundancy.

[Read more here.](#)

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## KICKSTART KICKING IN

Two stalled housing projects in the South East, at Ashford, Kent and Hellingly, East Sussex, are in the first ten schemes to be awarded Kickstart funding in the first round of bidding. A total of over £1 billion is available in this programme to unlock housing developments held up by the current economic conditions. The second round of bidding was launched by Housing Minister John Healey on 14th September.

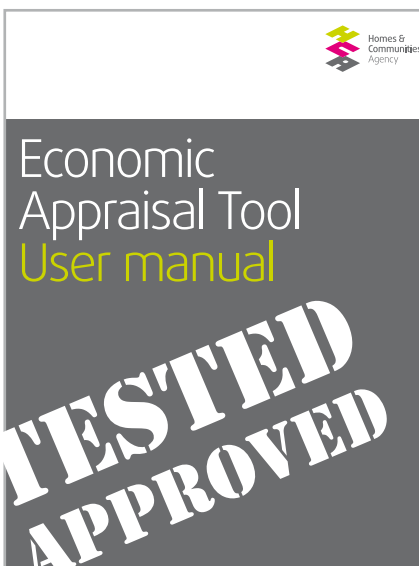
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*the proposed Rosebank development in Surrey*

## HCA ECONOMIC APPRAISAL TOOL IN ACTION



The HCA's new economic appraisal toolkit helps development partners see how grants from the National Affordable Housing Programme (NAHP) can help them deliver more affordable housing over the level provided from planning obligations alone. The toolkit can also assist Local Authorities and developers negotiate and agree the viability of planning obligations generally.

South East Excellence spoke to two councils who have used it....

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## WHAT'S WHAT

The Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE), the Government Office of the South East (GOSE), the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA), the HCA Academy, the Advisory Team for Large Applications (ATLAS), the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA) the South East England Partnership Board (SEEPB) and Improvement and Efficiency South East (IESE), not forgetting SEEDA through South East Excellence, all exist to support local authorities as they move regeneration projects forward. But knowing exactly who's who, what they do, how and for how much is not easy, and hence a new online "Who Does What Guide" is being developed and will be found via the South East Excellence website in the autumn.

[Read more here.](#)

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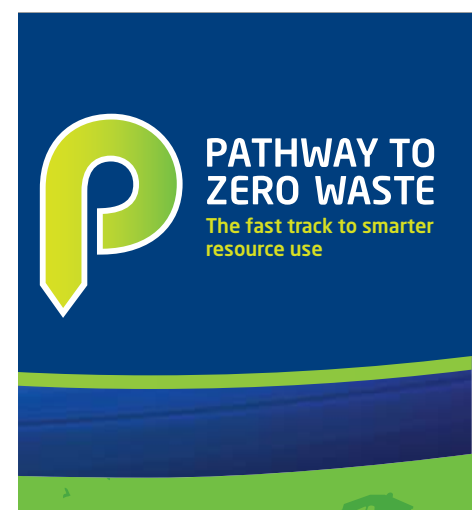


## ZERO WASTE WORKSHOPS

Pathway To Zero Waste (PTZW) aims to reduce the quantity of waste material generated by commercial and industrial activities in the South East, and increase the amount that is reused, recycled or converted to energy instead of being sent to landfill. It is focusing initially on reducing construction waste. Two joint PTZW and WRAP (Waste & Resources Action Programme) 'designing out waste' workshops, aimed specifically at architects and other pre-build professionals, are planned for late 2009/early 2010. [Register interest for these events](#)

[Read more here.](#)

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## ENVY MY GREEN STRATEGY

Parks, open spaces, town squares, streets, play space and land for housing are, or should be, reasons for community pride and an advertisement for towns and cities, to attract visitors and inward investment. The South East now has a Green Infrastructure Framework, produced by a group of Government agencies and voluntary organisations, including the Government Office of the South East, the South East England Partnership Board and Natural England, to help implement the South East Plan. It is to guide local authorities on how they should ensure green infrastructure is designed into regeneration and development projects. It can be downloaded from the LDF Guide pages of the **[South East England Partnership Board Read more here.](#)**



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## INSTITUTE FOR SUSTAINABILITY IS GO

The Thames Gateway Institute for Sustainability is moving ahead rapidly. Appointments of its chairman and board are imminent, with a very strong candidate list identified, while offices have been opened in London and Dartford. Up to £14 million of operational funding has been secured over the next three years.

**[Read more here.](#)**

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## BETTER BUT. . .



There have been some signs of better times for the economy but recovery isn't going to be rapid with very mixed signals about how long it will take.

A survey of the built environment sector by Housebuilder magazine reveals more grounds for optimism than for some time, but there are still caveats. On the plus side is more

availability of affordable land for development and the potential for growth as demand outstrips present supply. Heading the threats is relative lack of mortgages while the growing risk of unemployment is likely to make people more cautious about entering the housing market.

**[Read more here.](#)**

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## CAREER MAPPING

Where in the South East, can I find the course to start my professional career in built environment sector? Following an extensive research study, South East Excellence has produced a map which sets out the locations and content of courses from Further and Higher Education providers in the region to provide a comprehensive guide. The research reviewed the overall take up of these courses over the last few years and explored changes and trends in light of the current economic climate. The map can be found **[here](#)** and the supporting research will be at **[this link](#)**.

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## UK-GBC'S BIG STEP

The UK Green Building Council (UK-GBC) is launching its new Sustainability Training and Education Programme (STEP). Learning providers were invited to submit expressions of interest by 2nd October to partner the UK-GBC to deliver the programme. The first two courses, to start in 2010, will be an introduction to sustainable development, suitable for all professionals across the built environment and a leadership programme, aimed at senior decision makers within the sector.

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## ACTION ON SKILLS

The Homes and Communities Agency Academy's Skills Action Plan, launched in June, is now being taken forward. HCA's Director of Strategy and Practice, Jayne Crosse, told us: "All our partners are fully committed, sharing the ownership and drive needed for delivering real progress. So, watch our website in the next month for some exciting news!"

[Find out more about the HCA Academy.](#)

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## LOW CARBON INFRASTRUCTURE UPDATE

£20.96 million capital funding has been made available from the Treasury housing stimulus package for low carbon infrastructure exemplars in the Growth Points and Growth Areas, to reduce carbon emissions from housing.

This funding was announced as part of the 2009 Budget 'Building Britain's Future'. The budget refers to existing policies enabling £50 billion of low-carbon investment over the three years to 2011. Together with announcements made in the autumn 2008, measures announced will enable an additional £10.4 billion of low carbon sector and energy investment over three years.

### More on Low Carbon Infrastructure

Rowner, a housing renewal scheme in Gosport, in the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire Area is among the successful bidders to receive funding. A £1.12 million grant will fund a renewable Combined Heat and Power (CHP) energy plant to connect to the 700 new homes planned there.

[Read more here.](#)

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## HARD CORE CPD?

Making Continuous Professional Development (CPD) relevant to the needs of today's professionals was a key topic at the third annual regional Forum organised by the Construction Industry Council South East and attended by some of the 14 organisations offering CPD in the built environment sector.

With the pressures of the recession, many professionals are finding it difficult to take time out to attend CPD activities while there is also a reluctance among younger practitioners to get involved in conventional programmes. Debate centred on the need for what the Royal Institute for British Architects South East's (RIBA SE) Helen Wren calls hard core CPD: "There is a demand for shorter, more intensive sessions which drill down in depth. For instance, we are all well aware of sustainability but we need to go far further into detailed issues."

The Forum's delegates agreed that there is a need to modernise programmes especially for younger audiences who are increasingly online focused and much more likely to take part in CPD delivered that way. Moving towards this approach would however have cost implications but was a future direction which would have to be considered.

[Find out more here](#)

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## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

### **4th November: Planning for Climate Change Conference 2009**

London. [Find out more here](#)

### **18th November: Responding to the Economic Downturn**

Milton Keynes. [Find out more here](#)

### **19th November: : Trees and Urban Climate Adaption**

London. [Find out more here](#)

### **3rd December: Pragmatic Planning: From Policies to Places**

London. [Find out more here](#)

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