



Institute for Sustainability

**secbe**

South East Centre for  
the Built Environment



EUROPEAN REGIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT FUND

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## **AVOID THE PERILS OF THE GREEN RUSH**

**The opportunities for built environment SMEs to win their share of the £200 billion low carbon market and the potential of 40 years of work are real. But, like the famous gold rushes in history, many will charge after the riches, but only those who really understand will succeed.**

Enter the Institute for Sustainability's **FLASH+ programme**, to be launched at the first of a series of conferences on 27<sup>th</sup> September, to help the sector learn which green design and technology solutions really do deliver, how best to communicate this to potential clients and to find a green path to profit - without getting trampled in the rush.

With targets for low carbon in new and retrofitted buildings already set, there is a massive drive for innovation and delivering practical solutions at scale - applying anything from renewable energy technologies to insulation and smart control systems. **Many pilot projects are in place but the big question remains: what works and what doesn't, and where can you find independent evidence?**

The FLASH+ network is being coordinated and managed by the South East Centre for the Built Environment (SECBE) and partnered by the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA), the Federation of Master Builders (FMB), Constructing Excellence, Construction Industry Council (CIC) and the British Institute of Facilities Management (BIFM); it is part-funded by the European Regional Development Fund.

SECBE's Head of Market Development, Tina McGeachan, says: "There's almost a tidal wave of new technology flooding into mainstream building and construction, but the problem is knowing how effective it really is. The industry's emphasis has now turned decisively to making sure that buildings perform as intended and that innovation really does contribute to achieving carbon reduction goals. This programme will give access to a huge knowledge base and cutting edge demonstrator projects. FLASH+ aims to cut through the 'greenwash' and help smaller companies to identify opportunities, and provide reliable solutions to grow their business in today's difficult marketplace."

The programme and conference are free and aimed at architects, planners, designers, builders, engineers, and facilities managers; anyone in fact who is involved, or wants to be involved, in specifying, buying or delivering low carbon solutions. Qualifying businesses\* simply have to commit to 12 hours' involvement with the programme.

Through the opening conference, site visits, seminars, workshops, online material, including case studies and project reports, plus regular online newsletters, delegates will be briefed on the realities of low carbon design and build. The aim is to help businesses understand the importance of performance of newly designed or adapted buildings and how to measure effectiveness. “This knowledge gives companies a much better chance of selling low carbon solutions,” says Tina. “We’ll also be helping them understand financing opportunities including the Government’s Green Deal.”

Speakers at the launch conference, to be held at the Stanhill Court Hotel, Charlwood Surrey, include Brian Berry, Director of External Affairs at the Federation of Master Builders (FMB), Robin Roberts, Property Services Director, at Worthing Homes and Bill Bordass, of the Usable Buildings Trust. View full conference programme at [www.secbe.org.uk/flashplus](http://www.secbe.org.uk/flashplus).

Speaking about the FLASH+ launch conference Stella Okeahialam MBE, Programme Director at the Institute for Sustainability said “Leading experts in sustainable construction and building performance will explain the importance of designing and delivering buildings that meet the Government’s carbon and energy reduction targets.

“Guaranteed and proven building performance will enable property investors and owners to join the green building and retrofit ‘revolution’ with confidence. It also provides a huge business opportunity for the built environment sector” Stella added.

Admission is free but delegates must register first by contacting Tina McGeachan at SECBE on 0118 920 7204 or by e-mail [Tina@secbe.org.uk](mailto:Tina@secbe.org.uk).

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### **Eligible business**

\*Eligible businesses for membership are Small to Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) with less than 250 employees and turnover less than Euro 50 million or a balance sheet less than Euro 43 million. Business should be within the Construction/Built Environment sector and be located in the South East of England (Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Hampshire, Surrey, Sussex, IOW or Kent).

### **Notes to Editor**

#### **1. About FLASH+**

The Institute for Sustainability’s FLASH+ programme is part-funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). It has been designed to provide a range of free business support to help over 250 Small to Medium sized Enterprises (SMEs)\* in the South East of England exploit high growth, low carbon business opportunities. The project will focus on the results from measurement, monitoring and evaluation of building performance and give businesses access to learning and best practice from cutting edge retrofit projects via established trade and professional networks. These will be managed and coordinated by SECBE.

#### **2. About the South East European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)**

The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Competitiveness Programme 2007-13 is managed by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) on behalf of the European Commission, national government and regional partners. The programme is focusing on the

promotion of sustainable production and consumption. Approximately £22 million in ERDF funding is available for the South East region from 2007-13. ERDF investment is limited to 50% of total eligible cost and must be matched by other public and private sources

3. **About the Institute for Sustainability**

The Institute for Sustainability is an independent charity, led by a world class board representing UK industry, academia and the public sector, set up to accelerate the delivery of sustainable cities and communities. It works closely with partners to drive innovative and collaborative demonstration projects that identify practical solutions to creating greener and more prosperous places to live and work. The Institute shares the knowledge and learning from these and other projects to identify best practice, encourage investment and to actively support social and economic development.

4. **About the South East Centre for the Built Environment (SECBE)**

SECBE is a not-for-profit organisation that works with companies in the construction/built environment sector to win more work and be more profitable. Construction is a very large industry, employing over 300,000 and generating £18 billion per annum in the South East, and it has a significant impact on most other sectors. As the regional centre for constructing excellence, SECBE engages with government, businesses from across the whole of the supply chain (from client to manufacturer) and a host of key stakeholders to ensure that support for construction businesses is integrated, easy to access and effective.