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Press Release: Eco Homes for All

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Festival of green ideas to inspire new generation of Cambridgeshire eco homes

A new festival of green ideas comes to Cambridge in September and October with the aim of kick-starting a new generation of eco-homes. Supported by Cambridge City Council and award winning green companies Baufritz and Cambridge Solar, *Eco Homes for All* will give people access to the best expert advice from across Cambridgeshire for free. Events include five free workshops and two days of free householder led **Open Eco Home** tours around eleven homes. Running between **September 18th and October 18th** the events fast-track home makers towards their dream eco home giving participants the tools, knowledge and expert advice they need to start creating a vision for their own future home.

“It’s an exciting time for home makers in Cambridge.” Says festival organiser Allan Shepherd, **“There’s a lot of inspirational new eco-homes opening this year, which change the way we think about buildings. They are smart, stylish, low-energy and ready for the future. From individual houses like Housebuilder Bible author Mark Brinkley’s new low-energy self-build, to community-build and developer-led projects such as Marmalade Lane Co-housing and Cambridge University’s new community Eddington.”**

“The festival aims to tap into all this knowledge to help create the next generation of Cambridgeshire eco-homes, equipping people for free with the knowledge and inspiration to make it happen. The festival exists to kick-start the imagination and get people to the point where they’re able to say ‘wow, someone made this happen, what could I do?’”

Eco Homes for All will give people the opportunity to tour award-winning homes for themselves and attend workshops by the people who built them. Not only this but there will also be free advice and materials for people who want to retrofit their existing homes, with workshops on draught-proofing, solid wall insulation and getting your home ready for climate change. The five workshops and two days of Open Eco Home tours will give participants the practical knowledge they need to help create the home they want. They are all free and everyone’s time is given for free.

“We’re particularly excited about self and community-build, with workshops on each and seven homes to tour. The government have launched various positive initiatives such as the Right to Build and Community Housing Fund initiatives and Cambridgeshire councils are helping self-builders and community groups find badly needed plots. We know that most self-builders want to eco-build and we’re pleased to be working in collaboration with Cambridge and South Cambs councils, local Community Land Trusts and Marmalade Lane to help people make the most of all available new-build opportunities.”

Eco Homes for All runs from September 18th to October 18th. The Open Eco Homes householder-led tours are on Sunday September 30th and Saturday October 6th. Tour bookings open on August 20th and are essential. All bookings, workshop dates and full programme via www.openecohomes.org or 01223 301842.



Editor's notes

1. Visitors to **Open Eco Homes** can book tours via www.openecohomes.org.uk or by phoning 01223 301842 from August 20th. Homes are open September 30th and October 6th and offer four tours per day, with a maximum of 8 people on each tour. All tours are free.
2. Self-build homes take centre stage at Open Eco Homes 2018, along with an Eddington show home by Hill and a host of impressive DIY and professional renovations. As well as co-housing project Marmalade Lane, open homes this year will include *Housebuilder's Bible* author Mark Brinkley's new self-build home off Mill Road, the award winning Baufritz home Treehouse and an Arts and Crafts inspired decorative self-build in Grantchester.
3. Interviews with householders and photographs are available on request. Contact Allan Shepherd for more details - allan@openecohomes.org
4. Eco Homes for All will take place between September 18th and October 18th and will include five free workshops run by experts from across Cambridgeshire. Dates and details below and at www.openecohomes.org/events/
5. **The workshops:**
 - Co-housing and Community Land Trusts** – Tuesday 18th Sept, 7.30-9.30pm, St Barnabas Church, speakers Emily Mulvaney and Anthea Dodson from East Cambs Community Housing and Stretham and Wilburton Community Land Trusts and Ian Collins from Marmalade Lane co-housing project.
 - Successful draught-busting and ventilation** – Saturday 22nd September, 2.00-3.30pm. Hosted as part of Chesterton Repair Café, St Andrew's Hall. Led by CCF Chair and OEH host Tom Bragg and Chesterton resident Claire Graziano.
 - Eco Self-Build – make it happen** – Wednesday 26th September, 7.30-9.30pm, Wesley Methodist Church, Christ's Pieces. Speakers include *Housebuilder's Bible* author Mark Brinkley, Laurence Castle from South Cambs District Council and OEH host Kate Hawksworth.
 - Getting your home ready for climate change?** – Monday 15th October, 7.30-9.30pm, St Barnabas Church, Mill Lane. Led by author and energy consultant Nicola Terry, Anne Cooper of AC Architects and Tom Bragg.
 - Solid Wall Insulation Choices** – Thursday 18th October, 7.30-9.30pm, St Barnabas Church. Speakers include Jason Palmer, author of *Solid Wall Insulation*, Architect Margaret Reynolds and Tim Acheson of Green Hat Construction.
6. Through the winter CCF are also offering free thermal imaging training and loans of cameras that can show where buildings leak heat.
7. Open Eco Homes is supported by a range of funders and sponsors. Our major funders and Gold sponsors are Cambridge City Council, Cambridge Forum for the Construction Industry, Baufritz and Cambridge Solar (British Renewable Energy Installer of the Year and East of England Solar Installer of the Year award winners 2018). Our bronze supporters are Mole Architects, Margaret Reynolds Architect, AC Architects, Anglian Energy Solutions and Green Hat Construction.
8. Open Eco Homes is organised by Cambridge Carbon Footprint (CCF), a registered charity committed to creating environmental, economic and social benefits for Cambridge. Other CCF projects include Circular Cambridge and the CirculART Trail. Registered charity no. 1127376.
9. This is the 9th year for Open Eco Homes. A high percentage of the hundreds of visitors go on to improve their homes in an ecological way. Householders save energy and carbon emissions, whilst making their homes nice and cosy. On the tours householders share practical information, inspiration and advice, showing people the changes they have made and explaining what sort of difference it has made to their lives. Meeting the householders will be a great experience for visitors. Every one of them has unique knowledge to pass on because every house is different and everyone has carefully chosen the home improvements right for them and their home.
10. Open Eco Homes will be running tours of **Cambridge Mosque** in February soon after its completion. It will be one of the first opportunities local people will have to see the completed Mosque. Cambridge Mosque is a major step forward in creating global solutions to climate change, because it takes the environmental message to one of the biggest faith communities.