



**Open Eco Homes 2013**  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **Eco building: our Grand Designs moment**

Kate and Nick Hawksworth knew they were challenging themselves when they set out to build their eco-home in Girton, but they didn't bargain on their own special Grand Designs moment when their rammed earth feature wall collapsed mid build. At 5.2 metres high, their rammed earth wall was to be one of the highest in the country built without cement; the only taller ones they could find were at the Institute for Alternative Technology in Wales.

As it isn't a technique most builders are familiar with, they found there was little help available for home builders keen to build a rammed earth wall, particularly one without cement. Unable to find an expert to build it for them, they did mountains of research and set to work managing this part of the build themselves. When the wall collapsed they were devastated. No one was injured in the fall, but it was tough on the couple who went to great lengths to delay the rest of the build while they regrouped and rebuilt the rammed earth wall.

Thankfully, the rest of the build went by relatively smoothly and despite their setback their home took less than a year to go up. Kate and Nick are absolutely delighted with the finished house. They moved in a year ago, and have nothing but praise for their architect and builders. "We love the light, the space, our views and our rammed earth wall," says Kate.

Keen to share their experience with other would-be eco builders Kate and Nick are opening up their home as part of the Open Eco Homes project run by Cambridge Carbon Footprint. Their house is one of 16 eco-homes in and around Cambridge which will be open for guided tours on Saturday June 15<sup>th</sup> and Sunday June 23<sup>rd</sup>. The tours give visitors the opportunity to see eco-features in situ and hear the owners' stories.

"Open Eco Homes is not just about custom builds like Kate and Nick's, there are eco renovations too" says Alana Sinclair, Coordinator at Cambridge Carbon Footprint.

“We have homes of all different ages and types. It’s inspiring for people to be able to visit a home just like theirs and see what others have been able to do. And as well as being very knowledgeable about all of the eco features of their homes, all of the homeowners have a story to tell, so it’s a bit of fun too.”

For more information on Open Eco Homes and to book your visit go to [www.openecohomes.org](http://www.openecohomes.org).

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## **ENDS**

### **PRESS ENQUIRIES: ALANA SINCLAIR**

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#### **Editor’s notes**

- For interviews with Kate and Nick Hawksworth or other home owners/renovators participating in Open Eco Homes contact Alana Sinclair
- Photos of all of the homes participating in Open Eco Homes are available on request from Alana Sinclair

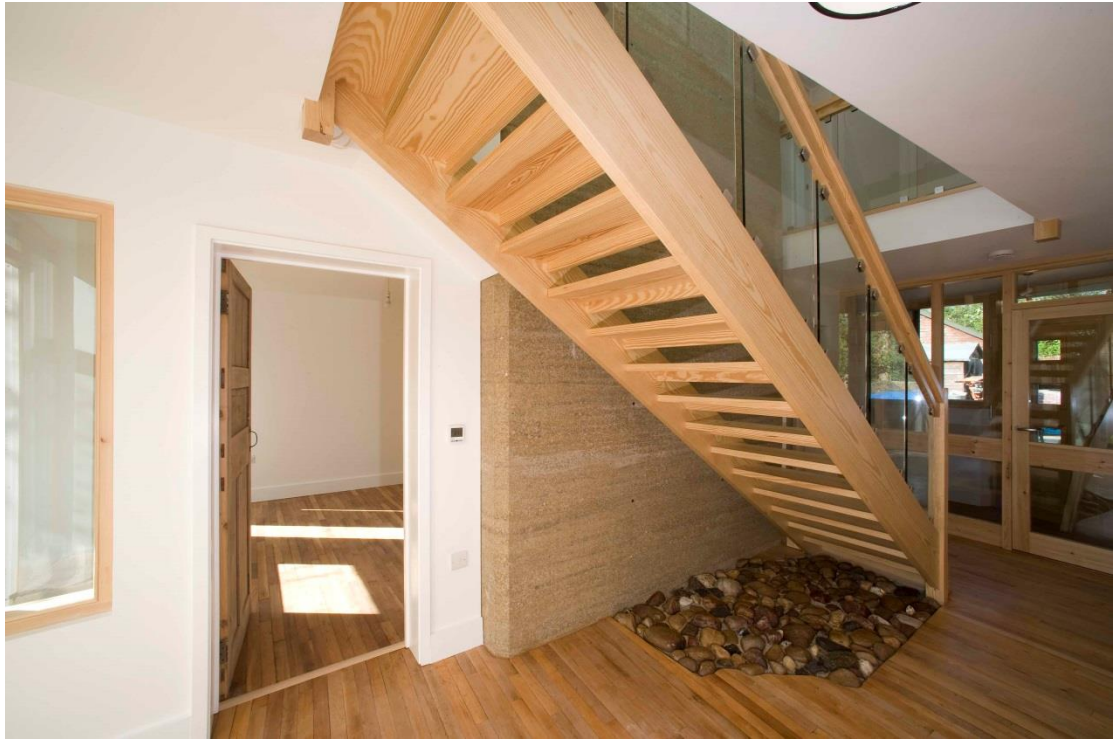
Open Eco Homes: The open days are on Saturday 15th and Sunday 23rd June 2013.

Visitors can choose homes to visit at [www.openecohomes.org](http://www.openecohomes.org). Bookings can be made online, or by calling Cambridge Carbon Footprint on 01223 301 842.

#### **Organisations**

- For details of Open Eco Homes see: [www.openecohomes.org](http://www.openecohomes.org)
- For details of Cambridge Carbon Footprint see: [www.cambridgecarbonfootprint.org](http://www.cambridgecarbonfootprint.org)

#### **Photos**



**Interior 1: Rammed earth feature wall**



**Exterior**





**Interior 2 (including rammed earth wall on left)**



**Interior 3 (including rammed earth wall)**