



## sustainability

There is still too much poor advice coming from professionals and building contractors about the possible use of environmental measures, but this is more a reflection of their complacency and ignorance, than the real environmental potential for your project. We hope that your church will be around for another 100-1,000 years!

There are many other good reasons to devote serious thought to maximising the environmental sustainability of your project, (e.g. as a celebration of God's creation and gifts) not least the availability of some funding/savings/income. **Building as usual is no longer acceptable.**

Take a fresh and imaginative relook at your site and dedicate some time to an environmental workshop as a specific section in your project plan and involve some local stakeholders such as environmental groups and the local university (students from specialist departments could research different options for you). Also, take some time to do some independent research and visits (the Green Building Council is a good start). If you have an example project in mind, have a project working group meeting there. Again some time on the internet can inspire new thinking – this is an area where there is constant innovation.

Once finished (yes one day it will happen!) your development project will probably be in place for a minimum of 50+ years. This should therefore be a major imperative for quality, flexibility and sustainability. This same period is also very likely to see ongoing and accelerating climate change and rapidly increasing costs for energy, water and food. At the very least, we are looking at higher summer temperatures, more droughts and

more intense rainfall, including floods, in some areas. How will you address these issues (climate change adaptation) in your brief for the architects and in the business plan? Some simple, inexpensive and embedded measures up-front can make real differences e.g. electricity plugs installed at a higher level, passive air circulation, soil rehabilitation etc.

Here is a quick run through of the arguments for a full sustainability approach, in case you still have some dinosaurs that you need to convince:

- Reduced running costs and generated income.
- Some funding for green measures is still available.
- Planners, staff and customers now expect to see serious consideration being given to sustainability issues.
- Anticipating future regulation.
- A cost effective way of adding quality and attractiveness to your (re)development.
- Major reputation and image benefits (change your image!).

There is less and less difference in the cost of using recycled and sustainably sourced construction material. Certain products such as eco paints, lighting and passive ventilation systems can have significant health benefits and in many cases reduce the running costs.

A number of effective and cheap measures can be included in your project design – the advantage of a development project is that you can include environmental measures at little or no additional cost. Some of the more

- Green roofs
- Water saving toilets, taps and showers
- Low energy appliances
- Recycled building materials
- Heat sources pumps
- Solar power/windmills
- High standards of insulation
- Noise reduction measures
- Triple glazing.



There are still a range of environmental grants available for renewable energy with advice on several websites including; the Carbon Trust, environmental organisations and the Department for the Environment. Other organisations such as the National Lottery and foundations also look more favourably on those projects that specifically include environmental measures.

Going green is a win-win and it can help raise your profile with the groups that you want to engage with and make your project more sustainable in all senses of the word.

Our rapid development programme (**rdp**) covers many of these issues in more detail and includes a range of in-depth buildings resources that are made available free of charge to participants. For more detail about **rdp** please visit our website or contact us.

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basic and inexpensive measures available include:

- Better use of natural light and sun pipes
- Orientation of the building
- Use of shading
- Rainwater harvesting
- Generous roof over-hangs
- Use of grey water
- Higher thermal mass