

**Our Place**

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# Sustainability in the News – No 6

**This is your latest extract of news stories around sustainability and regeneration all taken from the regional on-line newsletter – bdaily – in recent weeks.**

**They will help you and your pupils understand some of the current issues surrounding sustainability and to learn of some of the new initiatives, products and services being offered in this growing area.**

**We hope they provide inspiration and ideas.**

**Our Place**

being delivered across the region through a



## B daily May 30

### Â £40m pot to help buildings go green

**Organisations in the North East could be eligible for as much as £1m each as part of a £40m funding pot aimed at raising awareness of the benefits of renewable energy technologies.**

As part of the second phase of the Low Carbon Buildings Programme, North East England could be rewarded if its businesses 'go green' - by obtaining and installing renewable technologies including Solar PV and thermal, wind, ground source heat pump and biomass.

The funding comes from the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (DeBERR), and is only available for a limited time. Organisations are being encouraged to attend an event in Newcastle on Wednesday 25 June to find out how they can apply.

Alex Fowler, One NorthEast's Energy Analysis and Policy Specialist Advisor, said: "This funding has been allocated to encourage organisations around the country to think more about their energy use and the affect this has on the environment and we want to make sure this region gets its fair share.

"We're trying to promote the benefits of being more 'green' and energy aware, as this will not only help the environment but the organisations themselves, as their bills will be reduced, leading to more investment and money put back into their communities. In turn this will benefit the region's economy."

To register for the event in Newcastle go to [www.lowcarbonbuildingsphase2.org.uk/events](http://www.lowcarbonbuildingsphase2.org.uk/events).

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### Home improvement costs up by 20%

Homeowners across the North East are being hit by the rising costs of transport and raw materials as the costs of home improvements soar, according to new figures. According to the [Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors](#), the average cost of improvement work has risen by 20% over the past two years.

The Institute's Building Cost Information Service (BCIS) has produced a Property Makeover Price Guide, which aims to give North East homeowners a guide to the prices they should expect to pay for home improvements. It also lists some of the reasons for the rise in prices, including the falling numbers of EU tradesmen, the increasing cost of fuel used to transport materials, and the rising cost of the materials themselves.

The guide also shows differences in the cost of improvements based on location in the UK. A 3x3 single storey extension will cost around £23,940 in Greater London, but £19,320 in the North of England.

Joe Martin, BCIS Executive Director, said: "The current downturn in the housing market is forcing some homeowners to become more creative in meeting their accommodation needs. Many are choosing to stay put and renovate or extend in order to upgrade their property rather than taking on more debt in a falling market. This can be a wise strategy as home improvements add value to a

property, and people will be well placed to take advantage of this uplift in value when the market shrugs off the current slump.

"Given that the cost of home improvements rose by 20 percent over the past 2 years compared with only eight percent in average wage growth, many homeowners are opting to act now rather than paying more further down the track."

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## **B daily June 6**

### **Call for community to open new campus**

Gateshead College is looking to the people of Gateshead to help officially launch the new Baltic Campus. Ex students, retired staff and community groups are being invited to help open the £39 million building on Gateshead Quays. The campus welcomed its first students in February and will be officially opened in the last week of June.

A weeklong series of events has been planned for the week of 30 June to mark the opening, and more than 100 people each day will be invited to attend the events.

Gateshead College's principal, David Cheetham, said: "We are extremely excited about the official launch of our landmark building and we want the people of Gateshead, our local community, to join us to mark the occasion.

"Gateshead College has served the borough for more than 50 years and in that time we have helped many individuals and businesses achieve great success through learning and skills. We will continue to do this as we enter a new era for the College and we hope that community groups and anyone who has studied with or worked for us in the past will come forward and register to attend these very special events."

Guests will be treated to a full tour of the new campus. They will be welcomed by principal David Cheetham before enjoying a performance showcase by students and The Sage Gateshead in the new theatre and food and drinks prepared by catering students.

Any past students, staff and community groups wishing to attend the events should contact Gateshead College's marketing department on 0191 490 2456.

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## **B daily June 9**

### **Highest endorsement for local food company**

A firm delivering organic and traditionally farmed produce to locations across the North East has received a national stamp of approval. [The Honest Food Partnership](#) in Spennymoor received Soil Association accreditation which guarantees its produce has been grown or produced to the highest organic standards.

It was launched less than a year ago by friends Mirrae Rose-Gray and Helen Deacon, who were concerned about modern attitudes towards food production such as genetic modification and increasing food miles.

Following a successful start, the resourceful duo already have plans to diversify and expand their product range to incorporate organic pet food, baby food, alcohol, cleaning products and skincare items. Potential customers include local hotels, schools and nurseries.

Helen Deacon said: "As organic consumers ourselves, we found tracking down the various items we were looking for frustrating. The Honest Food Partnership acts as a single point of purchase bringing together local farmers, growers and producers and to serve the local community."

Colin Willis, [Business Link](#) account manager, who helped the company get off the ground, said: "Business Link assessed and identified the company's training needs and put Helen and Mirrae in touch with appropriate training providers, meaning the business is now able to expand and stay competitive. We also helped to access finance and provided support throughout.

"The Honest Food Partnership has proved to be a huge success already as Soil Association accreditation is only given to businesses whose food products are produced and processed to strict animal welfare and environmental standards."

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## **B daily June 17**

### **Premier recycles waste from UK's greenest university**

A North East waste management firm is expanding into the Yorkshire region after securing a major contract, which will maximise recycling efforts and benefit almost 40,000 people studying in Leeds. Durham-based [Premier Waste Management](#) hopes to help the University of Leeds improve its reputation as one of the UK's greenest universities after finalising a six-figure waste collection and recycling contract.

Premier will now collect all the university's general waste and transport it to a materials recycling facility in Leeds, diverting it from landfill. The three year contract will see Premier deliver over 150 wheelie bins to the university to be emptied daily; plastic, paper, cardboard, wood, MDF and glass will then be removed for recycling. Compost bins are also being supplied to separate food and green waste from the general waste. This green waste will be made into compost.

Paul Hodgkiss, Premier's head of operations in Yorkshire, said: "This was a challenging contract to win. The university is a busy location so we can only be on campus between 4am and 7.30am. We are set to reduce the level of material going to landfill and increase an already high recycling figure."

The university won a Green Gown Award in 2007 for its work promoting an environmental agenda across departments. It is currently working to meet UK waste targets and currently recycles 40 per cent of its waste. However the new contract will see recycling totals across the university reach 70 per cent.

Dr Keith Pitcher, Environmental Officer at Leeds University, said: "Staff and students have contributed to the university's success in winning national awards for our waste management programmes. The

contract with Premier is the latest initiative and we see this as a major step to improve our performance."

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## **B daily June 20**

### **Completion nears on Durham business park**

A state of the art business development which has the potential to create dozens of new jobs is nearing completion. B and K Developments is building 20 new business units which will be completed at the end of August, branded as City West Business Park, at Meadowfield Industrial Estate in County Durham.

Billy Morgan, Managing Director of Washington-based B and K Developments, said: "We are really excited about the potential of this development, which is really starting to take shape now. "We've put a lot of work into ensuring these units are of the highest standard, but of course this wouldn't have been possible had One NorthEast not allowed us to purchase some of their land, so we are very grateful to them."

B and K Developments was founded in July 2005 by husband and wife team Billy and Karon Morgan. Before then the company, which employs three people, operated for over 20 years as W Morgan Builders. During this time it was involved in projects including the construction of Bowburn Nursing Home and Chilton Care Centre.

Ed Rowley, Acting Director of Regeneration at One NorthEast, said: "B and K is a growing company with its roots firmly in the region, so I am delighted they shared our views on the potential of this site, and we were able to work with them to see their ideas become a reality.

"We need companies like them to lead on developments such as this, because if we're to establish the region as the forefront of business and industry, it's vital we have more quality accommodation to offer expanding regional, national and international firms."

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## **B daily June 27**

### **Bamboo creates eighth wonder on the Tyne**

Work has begun to create an eighth bridge across the River Tyne using 20 tonnes of bamboo.

The temporary suspension bridge, spanning over 100 metres, will take shape over the coming weeks, and its completion on Friday 18 July will mark the start of the SummerTyne festival.

Bambuco, an Australian company specialising in the construction of huge-scale bamboo sculptures, have been invited by culture10, based at NewcastleGateshead Initiative, to bring an international team of riggers to create their most ambitious work to date. The bridge will be constructed entirely by hand and span from the Law Courts in Newcastle across to HMS Calliope in Gateshead. The riggers will construct the 25-metre-high towers and then joining them with a suspension-style bridge made up of around 800 individual pieces of bamboo, some up to 9 metres long.

Spectators will be able to ask riggers questions during the build and find out more at exhibitions in the viewing box at BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art and the Concourse of The Sage Gateshead. The completed bridge will be on display for the opening weekend of SummerTyne - though crossing it will be strictly reserved for the Bambuco team.

Stella Hall, Creative Director of NewcastleGateshead Initiative, said: "People should prepare to be awestruck by the sight of an eighth bridge slowly taking shape on NewcastleGateshead's iconic quayside. "This temporary bridge will put the international spotlight on our breathtaking riverscape and its completion will mark the start of SummerTyne festival. It is one example of how this summer we will be showing the world why we are a vibrant and cultural place to live and visit."

To watch the progress of the eight bridge and for more information visit [www.NewcastleGateshead.com](http://www.NewcastleGateshead.com). For more information about SummerTyne visit [www.thesagegateshead.org](http://www.thesagegateshead.org).

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## **B daily June 30**

### **Sunderland supports Alternative Fuel Technology conference**

An international automotive conference is coming to the North East after receiving backing from Sunderland City Council.

'Partners4Automotive' is a two day event which will be held at the University of Sunderland's Tom Cowie Campus at St Peters, on 17-18 September with the theme of 'Alternative Fuel for Technologies, vehicles and transport systems'.

The event will include a number of presentations by leading experts as well as seminars and workshops on key topics such as storage and distribution, environmental issues and engine development and maintenance. There will also be a 1-2-1 'speed networking' session which will help local businesses establish new contacts with potential partners from both within and from outside of the region.

Councillor Paul Watson, leader of Sunderland City Council, said: "We are delighted to be a major sponsor for the Partners4Automotive 2008 event which will provide local business with a fantastic opportunity to understand the opportunities that are being developed in the low carbon and alternative fuel technologies. "It will also provide the opportunity to make important new contacts with like minded business people and be able to explore future opportunities for joint co-operation and business development."

Phil Eadon, project director for Partners4Automotive 2008, said: "Normally an event like this takes place in London or in the USA. With Sunderland Council's support it is now going to be on [local businesses'] doorstep so there are no excuses for not getting involved. It will also be a great way of showing off the true capability of Sunderland and the North East as a business location for automotive engineering."

For more information visit [www.partners4automotive2008.co.uk](http://www.partners4automotive2008.co.uk).

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