

PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENTS



WHAT CHALLENGES DOES THE SOUTH EAST FACE?

With continued growth and prosperity in the South East comes future development – new housing, business space, roads, community facilities, retail outlets and public spaces. Plans to build around 600,000 homes and associated infrastructure in the region over the next 20 years make it critical that new developments incorporate as many facets of sustainability as possible.

Increased demand from new developments puts pressure on water resources, exacerbated by climate change and rainfall patterns. Warmer, wetter winters and hotter, drier summers, a rise in sea levels and more extreme weather events reinforce the need to consider carefully where we build.

Transport congestion is another challenge for the South East, with a number of bottlenecks in the road and rail networks resulting in travel time delays, poor connections and access.

We also need to address waste management; with the region managing 25 million tonnes of waste per annum and this figure increasing by three per cent every year. The majority of this waste goes to landfill.

HOW CAN WE MEET THESE CHALLENGES?

The construction industry, developers and planners have to recognise the significant impact of developments on land use, energy, natural resources, ecology, waste management and transport. The region has to champion sustainable building methods reflecting the social, economic and environmental factors of the South East.

There is a need to create greater awareness of sustainable development, and how specific issues such as climate change and water scarcity can be addressed in development proposals and in the statutory planning process.

Developers need to adopt best practice in building construction and design, as well as promote the benefits of sustainable construction; both for the consumer (energy and water efficiencies, transport, etc) and the builder (cost savings, enhanced reputation, etc).



The Ropetackle scheme embraces sustainability at the heart of its development. All homes are built to Ecohomes 'Excellent' rating.



The South East faces particular challenges in addressing climate change and energy issues. SEEDA is working with partners to promote solutions through the South East Water Resources Forum. Image courtesy of Southern Water.

For climate change, construction professionals need to examine threats such as flooding and coastal erosion. To do this, they need to be given access to learning networks and experts in sustainability.



Creating sustainable communities requires social, community and cultural infrastructure. The Horsebridge Centre in Whitstable provides exhibition and community facilities as part of a mixed-use development. Image courtesy of Kent Architecture Centre.

WHAT IS SEEDA'S ROLE?

The South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) has a leadership role to play, using expertise to shape and influence new developments by demonstrating best practice and encouraging the sector to explore innovative solutions to the new challenges that face the South East. It is doing this by:

- Delivering strategic sites with chosen development partners in regeneration priority areas, to produce flagship schemes of economic, social and environmental sustainability.

At the Ropetackle waterfront development in Shoreham-by-Sea, West Sussex, SEEDA has ensured that sustainability is at the heart of the project. All the



SEEDA and the Prince's Foundation worked with the community and key stakeholders of Aylesham to create a plan for the future regeneration of the village which includes walkable, interconnected and sustainable neighbourhoods. Image courtesy of Create 247.



Community members in Aylesham, drawing their vision for the village's expansion during one of the SEEDA and the Prince's Foundation Enquiry by Design Events. Image courtesy of EDAAW.

- Working with partners to influence and shape future policy and encourage changes in behaviour through increased awareness and information exchange.

SEEDA is an active member of both the South East Water Resources Forum and the South East Climate Change Partnership (SECCP). The Agency works with both organisations to raise awareness of key issues facing the region. SECCP, in partnership with equivalent bodies in London and the East of England, has produced guidance for the construction industry on designing developments which reflect the need to adapt to climate change.

buildings harness renewable energy technologies as well as robust measures for greater insulation, reduced water consumption and the use of locally sourced building materials.

- Providing guidance on standards to achieve highest quality developments.

An innovative 'Sustainability Checklist', launched by SEEDA and the Building Research Establishment (BRE) in 2003, is a practical tool targeted at the construction industry. It helps developers explore the impact of their developments on land use, transport, energy, buildings, infrastructure, natural resources, ecology and community and business involvement. SEEDA uses the Checklist to bring forward its own sites throughout the region.

- Sharing best practice in sustainable construction methods.

Best practice in construction has been celebrated through the 'SEEDA Sustainable Business Awards for the South East' which demonstrate that sustainable business makes good commercial sense.



The Ropetackle development minimises environmental impact on natural resources through renewable energy technology.

- Providing expertise and guidance on masterplanning and design quality to create sustainable mixed-use communities.

A joint initiative between SEEDA and The Prince's Foundation used a new community enabling process in local masterplan development based on the Enquiry by Design (EbD) model, on two pilot projects – Aylesham in Kent and Leigh Park in Havant. This allowed all stakeholders, in particular the local community, to play a direct part in the production of frameworks, delivery strategies and design codes for development. In Aylesham, the aim was to regenerate and expand the village, creating a vibrant community centred on walkable, interconnected and sustainable neighbourhoods. Walking, cycling and the use of public transport were promoted over car use and the plan provides for a mix of employment, commercial, leisure and recreational opportunities within the village to reduce out commuting.

- Developing learning networks to share innovative best practice and demonstrate leadership in the sustainable construction arena.

SEEDA is working with Sponge, a unique organisation of over 800 young professionals working in design, architecture and construction related professions. Sponge exists to debate, promote and contribute to new ideas and successful initiatives relating to sustainable development and the built environment. It does this through organised events, training, peer group networking, study tours and site visits.

- Setting challenging targets for sustainability in developments.

At Queenborough and Rushenden on the Isle of Sheppey, SEEDA is working with partners to create a masterplan providing a mixture of homes, offices, commercial and community buildings for the regeneration of the area that incorporates sustainable development principles. An energy strategy will form part of the masterplan and highlight how a percentage of the energy demand of the development can be met by incorporating renewable technologies. The plan will also focus on recycling rainwater, reducing water consumption, increasing biodiversity value and reducing waste during the construction phase and once the development is occupied.

SEEDA is leading the renaissance of Queenborough and Rushenden with the creation of improved transport links, new employment, community facilities, environmental improvements and housing.



SEEDA SOUTH EAST
ENGLAND
DEVELOPMENT
AGENCY

Working for England's World Class Region

Development and Infrastructure Division
South East England Development Agency (SEEDA)
SEEDA HQ
Cross Lanes
Guildford
Surrey
GU1 1YA

Tel: 01483 484200

Fax: 01483 484249

Email: seeda@seeda.co.uk

Web: www.seeda.co.uk

