

Conversation 1 - Building Emissions

Wednesday 21 September 1.30 - 4.30

Edinburgh Centre for Carbon Innovation (ECCI), High School Yds, Infirmary St EH1 1LZ.

Aim

The aim of this conversation was to *“explore the role our buildings play in contributing to climate chaos. What options are there for responsible owners to contain emissions associated with constructing new buildings, refurbishing existing buildings and day-to-day management of our built environment?”*

Speakers

Dr Lori McElroy, Director - Building Energy Performance and Research, BRE Scotland, outlined the “broad policy options and practical measures being promoted”.

Kenneth Fraser, Technical Officer at Home Energy Scotland, introduced “local support and advice schemes run from Changeworks and others”.

Arleen Sinclair, SEDAbuild Development Officer, Scottish Ecological Design Association, shared “news of the Bridgend Community Bothy self-build project where volunteers can get hands on experience”.

Then the attendees grouped to discuss the main concerns arising from these introductory remarks.

Summary of the outcomes of the discussions

- The participating groups featured heating in buildings/ housing stock. However many of the actions suggested that continued use of fossil fuels was assumed to be the source of heat. The aim becomes how to use fossil fuels more efficiently, and to ensure that the systems created are flexible enough to cope with future fuel changes.
- In new buildings **high standards** should be enforced, with EPC for each building is level B or better. Policy, and the new Climate Bill, should embody sustainability, and be driven by values and consensus, rather than big business and money.
- **Retrofitting** insulation and renewable energy systems to improve existing buildings should set a target of a proportion of buildings meeting level C EPC by a given date.
- **Behaviour change** expectation of indoor temperature may be too high. Indoor temperature can be lowered from 21°C with occupants wearing more clothes when necessary.
- Facilities should **support fuel saving behaviour**, e.g. drying greens not tumble driers.
- All buildings should have mandatory heating controls and everyone be able to use them effectively.
- **More incentives** needed to motivate action by individuals, and landlords.
- It is essential that **other strategies** set district heating targets for each city by given date.
- Use more ground source heat pumps.
- Better understanding and communication needed, between planners, architects, legislators and building users.