

New Low Impact Roundhouse Planning Success!



Tony and Jane's biodegradable roundhouse.

Great News! After a ten year planning battle Tony Wrench and Jane Faith's roundhouse has been given retrospective planning permission by the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority (PCNPA).

The permission has been granted for a new application for a community development including eight roundhouses, with Tony and Jane's included. Consent was granted for three

years and is dependent on the meeting of criteria in respect to the sustainable elements of structures on the site; the long-term sustainability of the management of the land and the livelihood of residents. It also requires applicants to make a positive environmental and social/economic contribution to the area.

This is the first application of its kind in the National Park

since the adoption of the authority's policy on low impact development.

Tony Wrench said, "This is a great result and marks a breakthrough. We have received retrospective permission for what we already have here, but the permission for new roundhouses and huts is a first for Britain and marks a significant advance in planning terms."

"There will be many conditions attached, and the approval is under the Low Impact Development Policy 52 covering the whole of Pembrokeshire. It means we must use only renewable energy, reduce transport, use natural materials in building and meet 75% of our basic needs from the land. It is radical in that it offers an alternative to the growth-or-bust mainstream option of working all your life for a mortgage to pay for something you didn't build or design and isn't sustainable so won't keep you warm and fed when the crunch comes anyway."

Hope In Palestine



A Palestinian planting project.

Bustan Qaraaqa, The Tortoise Garden (and yes, it really does have tortoises), is a permaculture initiative near Bethlehem, started earlier this year by four Britons.

Working closely with the neighbours it is a model farm designed to serve as an educational site for developing permaculture techniques within the local community. Qaraaqa will show how permaculture can be used to create systems for sustainable living. They will deal with their own waste, produce their own food, harvest rainwater and have electricity supplied through sustainable technologies.

While the permaculture network expands and develops in Israel, community cohesion in the Palestinian area is dissipating due to the political and economic instability. The present lack of infrastructure means that even land that is still open to agriculture is rapidly becoming polluted, over grazed, and nutrient depleted. The only way to create functioning, sustainable urban areas is through local sustainability schemes that promote employment, education and food security.

Palestine's first permaculture site was the Marda Permaculture Farm, which recently ran a full permaculture design course.

For further information contact permaculture designer, teacher and author Jan Martin Bang, jmbang@start.no

Lammas Eco-Smallholding Plans Refused Again!

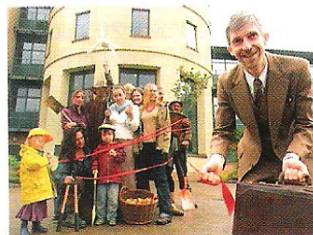
Lammas, Wales' greenest planning application, has been refused by Pembrokeshire County Council.

The proposal, near the village of Glandwr, North Pembrokeshire is for nine eco-smallholdings and a community centre. The scheme received over 850 letters of support and has been praised by experts from around the world.

The Design Commission of Wales undertook a review of the plans and concluded they were a 'benchmark for environmental rural regeneration' and praised the use of locally sourced materials. Average local house prices stand at £170,000, Lammas' plans offer the homes, for £80,000 each.

Paul Wimbush, the project co-ordinator, is disappointed in the planners report. "It wholly misrepresents our application. The planners assured us that our application would be assessed on permaculture principles. But, our application has been assessed on standard agricultural criteria and has thus been recommended for refusal. The whole point of Policy 52 is about creating a lifestyle from the land rather than focusing on profit."

The Low Impact Development Policy 52 was introduced in Pembrokeshire's Joint Unitary Development Plan in 2006 and makes provision for new eco-smallholdings in the countryside on the basis that they will make



Lammas caught-up in red tape.

a positive environmental, social and economic contribution. Lammas plans include generating their own electricity, growing crops for fuel and building from local materials.

Lammas will appeal the decision at the Welsh Assembly.

View details of Lammas application at their website: www.lammas.org.uk