

News release: 30th October 2007

Big Green Home of the Future

This week sees the start of a new competition for young pupils and students to design their Big Green Home of the Future to mark the launch of the Big Green Home Show taking place from 13th – 18th November, with a £1,000 prize for the winning school.

The National Self Build & Renovation Centre in Swindon, who is hosting the Big Green Home Show, has challenged young school children and students in a new annual competition, to design their ideal green home. The competition was launched in an effort to raise awareness of environmental issues and encourage the next generation to think differently about how and where they live. It has had a fantastic response from schools and colleges, all keen to get their students involved, and learning about the environment and tackling climate change, with an amazing 2,000 pupils taking part from around the region and further afield. Mrs Colleen Smith from Nythe Primary School in Swindon, which is aiming for Green Flag school status, commented:

"Our School is totally committed to green issues, whether its energy saving, recycling, walking or cycling to school, or planting a school garden to encourage biodiversity.

"We are very keen to deliver a creative curriculum making lessons as much fun as possible and relating to real life experiences. We have a team of highly motivated staff, pupils and parents who are all doing their bit to promote sustainability. This competition has given our school the opportunity to study another dimension of the global footprint in a fun and interesting way."

As part of the competition, BuildStore, the self build and renovation experts behind the National Self Build & Renovation Centre and the Big Green Home Show, are inviting children and their families to visit the unique Centre, to learn more about the environment and sustainability, using the educational and product exhibits for inspiration and discover how homes can be built or renovated to become more energy efficient. The 'Green Experts' from the Centre have also been out and about to visit the participating schools to talk to students about the energy efficiency, cutting carbon and reducing waste. Students learnt about latest technology, products and materials that can be used to reduce carbon and save energy around the home to incorporate into their designs, whilst also finding out about the smaller everyday changes that can make a difference. Mike Hardwick, Self Build Advisor at the Centre explains:

"There was no shortage of challenging questions from the pupils, who were all eager to learn more about green issues and how they could make a difference.

"Given the enthusiastic reception we received and keen interest shown by the pupils, it's clear that the environment will be a hot topic for years to come – it is a subject that has certainly caught the imagination of the eco-warriors of tomorrow!"

Each school will submit 20 entries and the Centre's experts will judge these and select finalists from each of the three categories – infant (5-7 year olds), junior (8-11 year olds) and senior. A representative from Swindon Borough Council Planning & Building Control department will then select three winners from each age category, plus an overall winner on Tuesday 13th November. The overall winner will be invited back with a school representative to be presented with their prize by special guest Peter Ainsworth MP, Shadow Secretary of State for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, on Thursday 15th November at 12:45pm

The Big Green Home Show, sponsored by EDF Energy, will lift the veil on greener living from Tuesday November 13 to Sunday November 18, with the help of the some Big Green Heroes in the shape of the BBC's Penney Poyzer, TV's friendliest Builder and star of the Discovery Channel, Tommy Walsh, and the Big Green Giant himself, Dick Strawbridge. With a host of features and expert advice to help visitors choose how to live a green lifestyle, from the latest products, design innovation and small changes in day-to-day life, the Big Green Home Show will demonstrate that a green lifestyle needn't mean a giant compost heap in the back yard. As well as eco-experts, visitors can hear from people who have built their own eco-homes, tour the renovation house to learn how to renovate houses to become more energy efficient, and check out the latest materials and products that can help to zap carbon and energy consumption.

Ends

Notes to Editors:

Photocall opportunity: You are invited to send a photographer to the National Self Build & Renovation Centre on Thursday 15th November, at 12:45pm, for photographs of the presentation by Peter Ainsworth MP, to the winning students and school representatives. Please contact Jaclyn Thorburn to arrange your attendance on 07809 583 116

Schools taking part include:

Wroughton Infant School

Peatmoor Community School

Oaktree Nursery & Primary School

Nythe Primary School

Seven Fields Primary School

Brook Field Primary School

Tregoze Primary School

Dorcan Technology College

Highworth Warneford School

Kingsdown School

St Joseph's Catholic College

Cotswold Community School

Nyland (Special Primary) School

Newbury College

Greendown Community School

Oxford & Cherwell Valley College

BuildStore offers an end-to-end service to the self-builder and people wanting to renovate or convert an existing property.

BuildStore's core services include:

- Land finding via its PlotSearch Online database, the largest in the UK with unique aerial photographs to view the plots prior to visiting the site.
- Fully trained mortgage advisors who understand what financial support self builders and renovators require.
- Expert and professional services to support self builders with the design, co-ordination and construction of their build.
- A Trade Card Account for self build, renovation and home improvement which guarantees low prices and expert service on materials to consumers.
- The UK's first and only National Self Build and Renovation Centre, Swindon; an impressive 67,000 sq ft Centre designed to educate, inform and inspire self builders and renovators.

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For more information, or to request an interview, please contact:

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