
Prince Charles eco homes

Posted by Basil - 2008/02/18 10:12

I saw this in the Guardian maybe someone here could take the opportunity of advising Prince Charles you can contact him on his home page website. I would also be interested to know if you can marry old materials with carbon neutralising your house.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2008/feb/11/ethicalliving.carbonemissions>

Re:Prince Charles eco homes

Posted by Nanos - 2008/02/19 09:31

I could see the sense in using sustainable wood for some home use. A while ago I came across Geopolymer concrete, an approach which apparently produces more eco-friendly concrete via an old method of ingredients.

<http://www.geopolymer.org>

I'm not a particular fan of plastics in a home (Some smell awful!), or some of the glues used in chipboard.

Re:Prince Charles eco homes

Posted by jackson - 2008/02/19 10:24

Nice post Basil

Its a good approach, but getting the airtightness up to scratch is one of the vital components for a low carbon house. The houses being built at the moment to meet high end efficiency such as the passivhus use a heat recovery system for their ventilation as the whole house is air tight,(when windows closed).

When you mean 'old materials'! Do you mean reclaimed materials or old such as stone. Its great to reuse (its one of the 4 R's of waste minimisation (reduce, reuse, recycle, recover)), but you may need to bring up to standard with building regs. ie reusing a nice old timber window...well its worth putting in double or triple glazing, which may mean modifying the frame a little. But then are there any seals?...probably not, and has the frame got gaps in it? letting the hot air out. etc etc. Maybe in the end cheaper to put in a new window, which you know meets the standard you are aiming for.

So, needs thinking through for each element.

Re:Prince Charles eco homes

Posted by Basil - 2008/02/19 16:44

Hi Jackson,

Yes airtightness is pretty essential, my house I think must be really airtight it traps freezing air inside all year round great in summer, hell in winter.

I'm not fastidious about using only old materials (and recycled) but have noticed in many cases during renovating the old house that the original materials have been used for a very good reason and are really giving and durable.

Double & triple glazing is great and can be put on the inside without effecting the character of the building but also they had shutters, thick curtains, tapestries, wooden panelling, durable rugs etc. Maybe there is a way of combining old and new sympathetically.

I have noticed the heat retention quality of pure wool beats any number of duvets. Old woollen products should definitely be recycled and made into insulation. This could probably extend to all animal or human hair produced from grooming and hair dressing. I bet someone is doing this already if not perhaps I should set up a business!

Hi Nanos

Thanks for the link. If you want to build something quickly and efficiently then concrete does make it easier. Sometimes I get sick of pandering to the time consuming demands of this old house and it's repairs there is more to life!

Re:Prince Charles eco homes

Posted by If i had a million dollar - 2008/05/23 11:25

Nanos:

When you mention the glues used in chipboard, i assume you mean the formaldehyde-based resin they used to hold it together. I think there is chipboard available that doesn't contain a formaldehyde (i'll try to find it). Its also worth remembering that this resin only becomes a danger when the board are cut or drilled into, and lots of sawdust is left lying around

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Re:Prince Charles eco homes

Posted by If i had a million dollar - 2008/05/23 11:40

Got it! Couldn't find a British site, but:

<http://www.columbiaforestproducts.com/products/prodpb.aspx>

Is a link to an American chipboard manufacturer that uses only formaldehyde free resin, as of early 2007.

Its also worth knowing that all engineered wood (glue laminated beams, MDF, etc) potentially contains formaldehyde

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Re:Prince Charles eco homes

Posted by jackson - 2008/05/26 12:37

Depending on what the board is for, you could use 'Panelvent'. It provides racking strength for a timber frame, it is also breathable (ie lets moisture move through it), and the board is held together by natural lignins. The board is created through a process where the the wood fibres are compressed under great pressure, the pressure is momentarily released causing the wood fibres to expand and split - releasing the natural lignins, the fibres are then compressed again forming the board.B)

Its a nice material to work with as you don't have the same worries that you would have with synthetic glue soaked sawdust in your hair and clothes and air you breath, while working. I think it may contain very low levels of formaldehyde....but worth looking into.

I would be surprised if there weren't other glue free boards out there as well.

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Re:Prince Charles eco homes

Posted by If i had a million dollar - 2008/05/27 11:47

Yes, there was a person and the bath and west sustainable homes fair a few months back with a table of samples, of products made similarly, made out of straw etc.
But wouldn't they fray, and fall apart under slightly damp conditions?

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