**Design Feature**

**Genesis Phase One**

The computer training centre named ‘The Tomas Fowler IT Centre’ was previously a disused 1960’s building attached to the former Castle Hill Hotel. Recycled newprint insulation, organic paints and triple glazed windows and doors are some of the features of this ecologically renovated building.

**Services**


**Contact**

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**Practice**

Gale & Snowden Architects seek to create ecologically sustainable designs.

Emphasis is placed on the integration of buildings and landscapes, people and their environments, to provide ecologically sustainable systems.

The practice undertakes new build and renovation work for a wide range of private, community and commercial clients.

Materials are chosen to be low in embodied energy, from sustainably managed or recycled sources, non-toxic and as local as possible.

Attention to detail and incorporating simple passive design methods such as passive solar gain, ventilation, breathing and heating systems are all characteristics of Gale & Snowden designs.

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**In brief**

Eco-Design Guest Editor:

Gale & Snowden have guest edited Eco-Design, Journal of the Ecological Design Association. The issue focuses on how human activity and nature can begin to combine to form beneficial symbiotic relationships. Contact EDA on 01453 765575

Environmental Training Centre:

Gale & Snowden have been commissioned to design a new Centre in Tottenham, London, for training unemployed people. Design work commences in the New Year

Woolsery Community Hall:

This Project has now received funding, including a Sports Lottery grant. Gale & Snowden are proceeding with working drawings and the project will commence on site later next year. The project has been featured in several design Journals, including the AECB and EDA Journals. Watch this space for progress on site

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**This issue**

Rackenford Community Hall
Office furniture design
Green barn conversion
Design Feature - Genesis Phase One

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**Design Feature - Genesis Phase One**

Phase One of the Genesis Community Project was completed in October 1998. The computer training Centre is open to the public, providing IT & training, Telecommunications services and more.

Phase One is the first stage of the renovation of Castle Hill Hotel which will provide a variety of community facilities. Phase Two (elevation above) will commence on site in the New Year.

To obtain funding it is essential that there is proof of the need for the facilities, that the Community is enthusiastic and willing to take responsibility for the project and that a good business plan has been created by the Community.

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**Funders back ecological projects**

It is evident that funding bodies are actively seeking to support projects that have ecological principles at their heart. With a 100% success rate in obtaining funding for projects, Gale & Snowden have proven that well designed sustainable projects are more likely to find support than those that do not address environmental issues. Our recent successes include:

- **Woolsery Community Hall**
  - Sports Council Lottery
  - Local Authority
  - Devon County Council
  - Football Association
  - Rural Development Commission
  - LEADER & Ratio Funding
  - English Partnerships
  - Torridge District Council
  - LEADER Funding
  - RIBA (feasibility study)
  - Lottery Charity Board (feasibility study)
  - Local Authority

- **Genesis Community Project**
  - Happy Pear Shop
  - Rackenford Community Hall

**Renovation Grants**

- To obtain funding it is essential that there is proof of the need for the facilities, that the Community is enthusiastic and willing to take responsibility for the project and that a good business plan has been created by the Community.

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**Books**

*Eco-friendly House Plants* by Bill Wolverton is a must for those interested in healthy interiors and plant species that are beneficial for health. Published by Weidenfield & Nicholson

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**Web site**

www.ecodesign.co.uk

Apologies to those that found our web site down in November. It is up and running again and will be updated in the New Year

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**Newsletter**

**Winter**

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Projects

Rackenford Community Hall

Planning
Gale & Snowden have completed the design for Rackenford Community Hall. A Planning Application is due to be submitted in the near future as are various grant applications. If fund raising is successful, detailed design work is expected by Easter 1999.

A hall in the woods
The hall has been designed to blend into an ancient woodland. It has been placed behind an established line of trees fronting onto a road. The building is a timber frame construction that is raised above the earth on stilts, treading lightly on the land.

Features include: super insulation (U Value below 0.2w/m²/K) using recycled newsprint, triple glazed windows and doors, green oak external cladding, natural ventilation, energy efficient quick response heating system, rainwater collection for public WC’s, energy efficient lighting & appliances, cedar shingle roof and organic/non-toxic finishes including paints.

Materials have been selected from sustainable sources, being as non-toxic and local as possible. Local labour is expected to contribute towards match funding for the project.

Office furniture design

Gale & Snowden undertake specialist furniture design. The drawing below is taken from an office reception desk designed as part of an interior fit-out for a solicitors office. Other specialist furniture designs that Gale & Snowden have recently completed include integrated kitchen units for a domestic property and the counters, shelving system and staircase at Construction Resources, the UK’s first Ecological Building Centre.

Product highlight - Toilets
A conventional flush toilet uses 20 tonnes of drinking water per year, whilst a composting toilet can naturally break down the same amount of waste into compost that would fill just two carrier bags.

Installation of a composting toilet is possible in most situations particularly where there is no water supply or anywhere to discharge effluent. Vast reductions in water consumption and effluent (the grey water generated can be used for watering the garden), there is no risk of freezing or blockage. Composting toilets smell less than traditional toilets and toilet rooms need no ventilation as composter vents built into the system tackle the odours at source.

How compost toilets work
The waste is deposited with a small amount or with no cleansing water into a chamber below the toilet where it begins to break down. This process is accelerated by mixing, aeration and warming, most units require regular addition of an absorbent e.g. woodshavings, to provide aeration, structure and carbon. Frequency for emptying depends on design and use – from once a fortnight to once a year.

The International Compost Toilet News website can be accessed at: http://www.nw.net.co.uk

Green Barn Conversion
A recent barn conversion designed by Gale & Snowden demonstrated how existing disused buildings can be ecologically renovated. All materials have been chosen to be low in embodied energy, non-toxic, sustainably and locally resourced. The building will be heavily insulated and a coppiced wood burning boiler will provide all the buildings heating and hot water contributing to a zero CO\textsubscript{2} emission design.

How half the UK's energy production is used by buildings. About 30% is used in housing and 20% in offices. As new build accounts for only 1% of the building stock a year, it is essential that existing buildings be renovated to high energy efficiency standards if we are to significantly reduce our CO\textsubscript{2} emissions.