

ECO EXPERTISE

WHATEVER SHADE OF GREEN YOU WANT TO BE, WE'VE GOT THE EXPERTS ON HAND WITH PRACTICAL AND ACHIEVABLE ADVICE



VISIT THE SHOW AND FIND OUT TV PRESENTER AND DESIGNER **OLIVER HEATH'S** PICK OF THE BEST ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY PRODUCTS ON THE



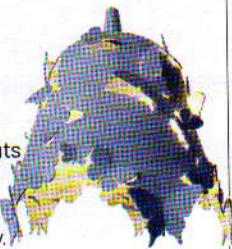
ECOLOGIST **DAREN HOWARTH** RUNS CARBON-BALANCING COMPANY C-LEVEL. HE'LL ADVISE YOU HOW TO MAKE YOUR SELF-BUILD MORE EFFICIENT

Do green products have to be more expensive?

Cheap products often carry hidden costs. You can save a few pounds on paint by buying non-natural products, but you will be filling your home with damaging chemicals and toxins. Something mass-fabricated in China and shipped to Britain will cost less than a product handmade in the UK, but its carbon footprint will cost the earth, quite literally. Spending power is our strongest tool – it can make even big corporations sit up and take note.

What's your current top eco product?

Delight's felt lampshades (ecocentric.co.uk). They're made with butterfly cut-outs for use with low-energy bulbs. They're green with a strong decorative quality.



What simple, easy steps can we take to live in a more environmentally friendly way?

Make your home more efficient – insulate it well, install double-glazing and use draught excluders and low-energy lightbulbs.

Change your electrical supplier to a company that uses renewables, like Ecotricity (ecotricity.co.uk) or Good Energy (good-energy.co.uk).

Can self-builders save the planet?

Twenty five per cent of our carbon footprint comes from our homes, so self-builders can make a massive cumulative impact on the environment. Building in an eco-friendly way can improve both our homes and lifestyles.

How can we build in a greener way?

In our seminar I will explain in detail the six principles of eco-friendly building. These can be applied to different degrees to suit each individual project. Then you can use the simple calculator on my website (clevel.co.uk) to tot up your project's carbon footprint. When you've reduced it all you can, carbon balance your home by donating money to schemes which reduce CO₂, like rainforest reforestation. It's not too pricey either – an individual home can be carbon balanced for a few hundred pounds.

Do green building methods cost a lot?

There are generous grants around. The Department of Trade and Industry's Low Carbon Building Programme is great but can 'sell out' quickly, so try your local authority, too. Green technology can also pay back – solar hot water provides 50 per cent of your annual heated water, for free.

