

# From A to Zed

## Realising Zero (fossil) Energy Developments

Published by Bill Dunster Architects.  
ISBN: 0 9545050 0 5

"... offers solutions to the building team and their clients. Together, the principles and the toolkit described in this book should make it just as easy to realise a ZED as any conventional development."

"The choices of construction materials made on BedZED, it quantifies the environmental benefits of these choices and describes how the materials were sourced, specified and used. The report provides case studies for individual materials and cost comparisons with alternatives."

Available from the Building for a Future website:  
[www.newbuilder.co.uk](http://www.newbuilder.co.uk) £35.00  
or direct from [www.zedfactory.com](http://www.zedfactory.com)

Bill Dunster is amazing! He is everywhere, and seems to have his own internal power station, generating unlimited energy to promote the cause of sustainable developments and, in particular, his own really successful brand of architecture: ZEDs or Zero Energy Developments. Now, probably in response to the thousands of people who have been to see BedZED or contacted him for more information, Bill has brought out the book of the buildings, a sign of a really successful development! This is bottom up architecture! Here the man on the street, student in the studio or architect in his practice – is asking the questions and Bill, has produced this book to answer them. It is very unlike the glossy, people free monographs, produced by the 'great architects' to set their own creations off in works of art like images, where descriptions of how the building works are limited to the captions of images. This book is a practical guide to the principals, theories and operation of the BedZED development and is full of useful information. Most architects will be know of the Beddington Zero (Fossil) Energy Development (BedZED) in South London initiated by Bioregional Development Group and Bill Dunster Architects. BedZED was developed by London's largest housing association, the Peabody Trust, as a mixed-use development with 82 homes and 3,000m<sup>2</sup> of commercial or live/work space. The first units were complete in March 2002 with total completion and occupation in September 2002. From A to Zed is a practical guide on how to realise a ZED - with sets of Housing Corporation accredited standard house types, an inventory of the ZEDproducts used to build them, and exemplar case studies applying the principles to real sites. The book describes the 'tools' to make the process quicker and easier, such as ZEDestimator which predicts the likely cost of a development and defines how much to pay for



a site to achieve a target profit return. The principles behind ZED's are also described, by means of a journey through the three main phases of a typical medium to large-scale project - feasibility; the planning process and detailed design; and the construction process, with a good section on the selection of materials.

What would also have been interesting is a review of the strengths and weakness of the development, of how the units actually work, not 'were designed to work', in terms of

build costs, energy consumption, air-pressure testing, mixed-use ideas, heating systems, electric cars provisions and comfort.

I do know that many of the residents love the 'passive solar' feel of the houses and the airiness and lightness and winter warmth. I have not heard yet how they perform in months like last August? Ultimately if we are to have really sustainable developments we need to understand how they actually work, in relation to each other, and with all the studies done on BedZed, this development has been researched more than most! This book is just as interesting to architects, developers, councils and building owners, and provides an important prototype for the sort of new building paradigms we will need soon enough if the energy prices keep climbing as they are, and we are to attempt to control the greenhouse gas emissions that are driving climate change! Alternatively we could all just plug into Bill!

Sue Roaf