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The Low Carbon Agenda

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Welcome!

This is the brand spanking new monthly newsletter from Terra Infirma, bringing you the lowdown on what you need to know about the Low Carbon Agenda and your organisation.

For the inaugural issue, I've hand picked your address from my own personal contacts list as I believe this newsletter will be of value to you. Please forward it on to anyone else who you think will be interested. If you read it and want to opt out, click on the unsubscribe link at the bottom.



All the very best,

Gareth

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I Blame Al Gore

I really do. Ex-high profile politicians just can't stick to the golf course or their herbaceous borders. They have to go and transform themselves into elder statesmen. And Al Gore, despite having personally hamstringed the Kyoto protocol while in office, decided to tackle climate change. No-one would ever have predicted that a film of a legendarily wooden man giving a Powerpoint presentation would be a smash hit, but Al managed it. And now you can't open a newspaper, switch on the TV, or even listen to local radio without someone banging on about their carbon footprint.

And it is spreading like wildfire. There's been a rash of TV programmes such as 'How Green is Your House', 'No Waste Like Home' and 'It Ain't Easy Being Green'. The Times, Independent, Guardian and Observer offer regular eco-living columns. Even the notoriously reactionary Sun has jumped on the bandwagon, sexing up climate change with images of a hot-bodied model couple sharing a bath.

The translation of this interest into consumer behaviour is starting to show. The market share of A-rated energy efficient white goods rose from 0% in 1996/97 to 74% in 2005/06. In the food sector, demand for organic products is far outstripping supply. At one point in 2007 the Government's monthly allocation of grants for microrenewables was being snapped up within minutes. Every self-builder and small developer I work with wants a ground source heat pump and underfloor heating after seeing them on 'Grand Designs'.

If you'll excuse the pun, the Low Carbon Economy is hotting up.

Businesses have traditionally seen this agenda differently - as a threat. For good reason too: there is a whole raft of legislation, current and forthcoming, to push you into reducing the carbon footprint of your business or your product: the Climate Change Levy, the Landfill Directive, the Fuel Tax Escalator, the London Congestion Charge, differential Road Tax for vehicles, the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive, Homebuyers Information Packs, the compulsory energy rating

of white goods, and the forthcoming Carbon Reduction Commitment: the list goes on. Added to this are soaring energy costs; oil futures hit \$100 a barrel for the first time in Feb 2008, and many have found their energy bill doubling in the last few years.

Aiming for mere compliance is an expensive hobby. Rules and regulations will always get tighter and no-one wants to have to invest twice in new technology to stay compliant. It is time to be proactive, be bold, go way beyond compliance and start to exploit the business opportunities that are emerging. But of course, as with any new agenda, there are plenty of risks awaiting the unwary - remember the dot com bubble?

In future editions of this newsletter, I will discuss how to manage this balancing act, looking at ways of exploiting the opportunities and avoiding the pitfalls. But before that, next month we will look at carbon footprinting. See you then!

News & Events:

The Low Carbon Innovation Network is running a series of Exchange events around the UK in 2008, starting with Bristol on 11 March, followed by Newcastle on 3 April. [More details here.](#)

The Energy Bill was introduced in the House of Commons on 10 January 2008. The Bill will update the legislative framework by putting in place new legislation to, amongst other things, cover the implementation of new technologies such as Carbon Capture and Storage and emerging renewable technologies. [More details here.](#)

Construction projects in excess of £250 000 will have to have a Site Waste Management Plan from April 2008. That's pretty much next month. A good free resource to help you can be found [here.](#)

Tip of the Month

Telecommuting (working from home) is carbon-friendly. The Department for Transport estimates that teleworkers working at home reduce their mileage between 48-77% on teleworking days and 11 to 19% overall.

The small print:
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