



## Environment Matters – 7 April 2006

### Welcome to the latest edition of Aardvark's fortnightly news briefing

- **Green homes sell better, survey shows** Seven out of ten UK homebuyers would pay more for an energy-efficient home, and almost half are prepared to invest an extra £5-10,000 in an eco-house with advanced energy and water-saving features, new research reveals. The results prove that installing energy-saving measures pays not only in terms of savings on bills for the home owner, but as a long-term investment that makes a property more sought-after when it is put on the market, the Energy Saving Trust said. ([EDIE 31/03/06](#))
- **Local conservation guidelines released** New guidelines for local planners on preserving sensitive habitats has been launched, in line with biodiversity aims. The guidance outlines best practice for local authorities to support biodiversity and geological conservation during planning decisions and development. ([Green Consumer guide 04/04/06](#))
- **Improved air quality can extend life expectancy** New measures to tackle air pollution could extend life expectancy, cut environmental damage from acidic air pollution and generate benefits of £1.4 billion a year, the government said. Air pollution is currently estimated to reduce the life expectancy of every person in the UK by an average of eight months. Measures outlined for consultation in a review of the Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland could help to reduce the impact on average life expectancy to five months by 2020. ([DEFRA 05/04/06](#))
- **UK offshore wind 'at crossroads'** Offshore wind energy in the UK is unlikely to reach its full potential unless there is additional support from the government, a report shows. The study says the fledgling industry is at a "critical stage" and economic and environmental opportunities could be lost without further assistance. The British Wind Energy Association (BWEA) commissioned the research. ([BBC News 04/04/06](#))
- **Hot air but no action** The bulldozers are out this spring widening the congested southern end of the M1, which is welcome news for anyone who has missed a low-cost flight from Luton airport because they were stuck in a jam, but one example of why Britain is way off course on its climate-change targets. People want to drive more, fly more and use more energy and they have hardly begun to change their behaviour in order to lessen the impact on the environment. The result is that the M1 and Luton airport are busy but Britain's carbon dioxide emissions have increased by 5.5% since 1997. That has made a mockery of the government's target to cut them to 80% of 1990 levels by 2010, a target that was in effect abandoned yesterday by the environment secretary, Margaret Beckett. ([The Guardian 29/03/06](#))

### Latest News from the Aardvark Team

- Aardvark has been appointed to provide ecology, sustainability and waste management advice for a new Regional Rural Business Centre at Junction 24 on the M5 Motorway as part of a detailed planning application.
- Laura Double is the latest recruit to the Aardvark team in an administrative and research role as well as providing assistance on projects - [lauradouble@aardvarkem.co.uk](mailto:lauradouble@aardvarkem.co.uk) .
- For all the latest Aardvark news [www.aardvarkem.co.uk](http://www.aardvarkem.co.uk).

### And Finally

- **Dumped mobiles cause waste crisis** The explosive growth in mobile ownership over the past decade means old phones, each packed with lethal cocktails of mercury, nickel and other compounds deluge the country. Every hour, Britons buying better ones to take advantage of offers from the networks dump 1,700 mobiles. This accumulation of dead ringers is an onslaught on our ecology: 15 million phones, each bursting with toxic chemicals, are thrown out to be buried in landfill sites or left in drawers and cupboards. Now experts are calling for action. ([The Guardian 26/03/06](#))