

Environment Matters –21 April 2006

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

- **Britain now 'eating the planet'** The UK is about to run out of its own natural resources and become dependent on supplies from abroad, a report says. A study by the New Economics Foundation (Nef) and the Open University says 16 April is the day when the nation goes into "ecological debt" this year. It warns if annual global consumption levels matched the UK's, it would take 3.1 Earths to meet the demand ([BBC News 15/04/06](#)).
- **Growing demand for non-food crops** In the 19th Century, the only "biofuel" that powered farm machinery was the hay and grain that fed the horses that pulled the plough to turn the soil. But the arrival of the industrial revolution, the advances in our knowledge of chemistry, and the utilisation of oil, revolutionised our lives. Since then, societies around the globe have not looked back. Coal and oil have fuelled economic growth for more than 200 years. But today, political leaders of all persuasions have to think the unthinkable and look beyond the age of oil ([BBC News 18/04/06](#)).
- **London to learn from Chinese eco-city** A Chinese eco-city is the inspiration behind a new carbon-neutral development planned for London's Thames Gateway. Mayor Ken Livingstone announced plans for the 1,000 home development, which is to apply lessons learnt from the eco-city of Dongtan to London, during his visit to China. The London Development Agency will deliver the project in cooperation with consulting firm Arup, which is behind the carbon-neutral and self-sufficient Dongtan development near Shanghai ([EDIE 19/04/06](#)).
- **Energy Review moves to next phase** The Government's Energy Review consultation has moved to its next phase, after meeting with more than 500 energy and environment experts, and receiving over 2,000 written responses. The process, which has been designed to outline the UK's future energy supplies, will now move towards producing a report to help form policy on the issue. Key factors that were assessed in the consultation included ways to reduce the UK's carbon emissions, the implications of increasing energy imports, the viability of a new nuclear programme and low carbon technologies ([Green Consumer Guide 19/04/06](#)).
- **Air Quality Strategy review consultation published** Plans for a review of the Government's Air Quality Strategy were published on 5th April. The consultation outlines further measures to improve air quality, and new objectives to improve public health and the environment. It sets out an agenda for longer-term action to improve our understanding of air pollutants and attempts to qualitatively assess the potential for further air quality improvements in the very long term ([DEFRA 05/04/06](#)).

Latest News from the Aardvark Team

- Aardvark have been appointed to work alongside BREEAM assessors, Faber Maunsell, on the assessment of the new Fire Control Centre at Blackbrook Business Park, Taunton. Aardvark will provide advice on land use and ecology, in particular focusing on the change in ecological value of the site and the long-term impact on biodiversity. For all the latest Aardvark news go to www.aardvarkem.co.uk.

And Finally

- **Parents urged to ditch disposable nappies** Parents around the world are being encouraged to opt for reusable nappies in a week long publicity campaign. Running from the 24th to the 30th of April, the tenth Real Nappy Week will be marked by over 500 events aimed at raising awareness of environmental and economic issues among the nappy-buying public. These include more than 60 "nappachinos", where parents will be invited to learn about the benefits of cloth nappies over coffee ([EDIE 19/04/06](#)).