

BUILDING BLOCK UPDATE

FROM THE AIRCRETE PRODUCTS ASSOCIATION

NO. 2



aircrete

BUILDING BLOCKS FOR LIFE

SUSTAINABILITY

WHAT DOES SUSTAINABILITY MEAN?

John Prescott - "... building better, greener buildings is a key element in our £38 billion Sustainable Communities Plan. This is the best opportunity we have had for generations to change the way we build."

Environment Secretary - "...We should demand the highest environmental standards possible in all our buildings to ensure that future homes and communities are sustainable and where people want to live..."

Secretary of State for the DTI - "...The aim to build better buildings, and tackle the key environmental issues of greenhouse emissions and waste, is clearly one which Government and Industry must work together on..."

Joint Announcement by DERFA, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the Department of Trade and Industry on Developing New Code for Sustainable Buildings, 2004.

With these very strong messages coming from the Government the sustainability qualities of building products are well and truly under the spotlight - so what is sustainability? How does Aircrete measure up? And how does it stack up against other building materials?



TO BE SUSTAINABLE

For a product to be environmentally sustainable it needs to be manufactured and used in such a way as to minimise its impact on the environment. This is a key issue confronting the construction industry and commands construction solutions that minimise the consumption and use of natural resources. It examines every element of the life of the product including; raw materials, processes, construction process, packaging and transport.

AIRCRETE'S CREDENTIALS

RAW MATERIALS

- Aircrete blocks are manufactured using environmentally responsible renewable materials.
- More than 98% of the raw materials used in the production of Aircrete in the UK are from the UK, therefore supporting the British economy as well as the environmental impact of transporting raw materials or products.
- Aircrete products present no risk of pollution to water or air.

MANUFACTURING PROCESS

- The manufacturing process is highly efficient with most waste material being recycled back into the process itself.

- Water from sustainable sources - rainwater, canal water and waste water from the manufacturing process.

CONSTRUCTION PROCESS

- Aircrete is easily worked and adapted on site to achieve the maximum usage and minimum waste.
- Aircrete's thin layer system (often referred to as thin joint system) combines the use of energy-efficient lightweight Aircrete blocks with quick setting thin layer mortar which speeds the construction process.

- Aircrete's thin layer system is recognised as a Modern Method of Construction (MMC) by the Housing Corporation. MMC focuses on systems which speed the construction process, cut waste, minimise the effect of construction on the environment, and create an energy efficient home to live in.

TRANSPORT

- Aircrete construction uses predominantly local materials minimising international haulage emissions.
- As the climate changes more homes are vulnerable to flood damage, high winds etc. Aircrete products will maintain robustness, whereas other lightweight, so-called modern materials may need to be replaced.

- Aircrete products are manufactured in the UK for the UK market, so transport costs are low, unlike most frame system products which are generally transported from Europe and further afield, which adds to the cost to both the customer and the environment.
- Due to its low unit weight, Aircrete allows a large volume of material to be carried on each delivery truck, thus minimising the number of deliveries.

HOW DOES IT STACK UP?

- The cellular structure of Aircrete products ensures they offer excellent thermal insulation, so helping to reduce the energy consumption of buildings, while also providing enhanced noise insulation between dwellings.
- Frame systems achieve thermal efficiency through the use of large amounts of insulation products, which often use chemicals in their manufacture, whereas Aircrete requires less insulation.
- Aircrete's thin layer system performs superbly under the EcoHomes environmental assessment scheme and internal and external walls built with Aircrete achieve A ratings within the BRE Green Guides.
- All APA members have set themselves strict environmental standards, and their products are manufactured at plants that operate an Environmental Management System (EMS) conforming to EN 14001.
- 100% of Aircrete can be recycled or reused at the end of a building's life.



The Aircrete Products Association comprises H+H UK, Tarmac Topblock, Thermalite and Quinn Lite – the major manufacturers of Aircrete products in the United Kingdom. It is a non profit-making organisation dedicated to promoting the benefits of Aircrete building products.



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