Stephen George
+ Partners LLP
Architects + Masterplanners

PRESS RELEASE

28 November 2017

Sustainable new build wins LABC Building Excellence Awards for Nicola Jones and Paul Rea (Builders) and Stephen George + Partners (Architects).

The Hemp House project at Bassingham, Lincolnshire, has been awarded the title of Best Individual New House at the Grand Final of the LABC Building Excellence Awards.

Architects Stephen George + Partners worked closely with owners, Paul Rea and Nicola Jones, to create a comfortable 21st century home that is easy to run and maintain and focuses keenly on sustainable materials, locally produced where possible, to achieve high levels of energy efficiency.

The 162m^2 Hemp House complements the existing buildings in the area, and consists of a lounge/diner, kitchen, pantry, plant room, front and rear lobbies and a downstairs bedroom with an en-suite accessible from the hall and the bedroom. Upstairs are two bedrooms, an office and a bathroom.

Having done a significant amount of research into alternative materials and methodologies, Paul and Nicola created the design concept as well as acting as project managers and sometime hands-on builders of their new home.

Says Paul, “We set out to build a house that had as low an environmental and energy impact as we could achieve in its construction, as well as being a healthy house that used the minimum of energy to run and was easy to maintain.”

In addition to working alongside the clients on the design of the house, Stephen George + Partners produced the technical drawings and steered the proposal through a demanding planning application process.

Explains John Morfey, Partner at SGP, “Planning was not straight-forward. The setting for the house was extremely sensitive, including existing trees surrounding the site. Initially, the planning officers wanted a single-storey building, but they accepted the merits of a design that is single storey at the back, which faces onto open fields, and two storeys at the front, facing the village street.

The design has a timber frame with Hempcrete construction for the external house walls. Hempcrete uses about one third of the energy of a traditional brick wall with no toxic emissions. Without needing a cavity or additional insulation, Hempcrete creates a breath-

able wall with good insulation levels. The hemp was grown in East Yorkshire so few "air miles" were consumed in the process.

Nicola adds, "We sought a good airtightness for the building and were pleased to achieve a figure of 1.78. The house has an "airlock" lobby at both the front and back doors to minimise the heat loss on passage to/from the house in the colder months."

The design concentrated on the installation of renewable technologies to achieve the energy efficiencies the clients required. Due to the high levels of airtightness and insulation in the construction, an air-source heat pump is sufficient to run underfloor heating on the ground floor and one oversized radiator in the upstairs bathroom.

Constraints in the planning approval prevented a PV array being installed on the house roof, but a 4kW system has been sited on an outbuilding roof. This has produced sufficient electricity for Hemp House to become a net exporter of power.

Concludes Nicola, "This has been a very successful project; the house is as warm as we would wish thanks to the renewable technologies used."

ENDS

All Enquiries to:
Claire Lalaguna @Satellite MPR + 44 (0)1394 384 040 / 07973 314 594 claire@satellitempr.com

Notes to the editor:

Image:
Please credit Nicola Jones.

Note on Hempcrete
Hempcrete is a relatively new composite material made from wet-mixing hemp shiv with a lime binder. It has been used as a building material in France and other countries for some time but only more recently in the UK. It provides a natural, vapour-permeable, airtight insulation material which has excellent thermal mass as well as being toxin-free, impervious to mould and pests, and highly fire-resistant. Hempcrete also has a negative carbon footprint, due to the carbon dioxide absorbed by the hemp as it grows and the carbonation of the lime, as lime turns to limestone during the curing process.

Stephen George + Partners:

Founded in 1970, Stephen George + Partners is one of the UK's leading architectural practices, employing over 80 staff across offices in London, Leicester, Leeds, Birmingham and Solihull. Success in the UK has led to opportunities overseas, resulting in the establishment of Stephen George International in 2009 and the International Logistics Design Group in 2014. In 2016 Stephen George + Partners turned over £6 million.

With its strategic geographical locations and talented architectural design teams, the practice specialises in masterplanning and the residential, industrial, logistics, office, education and retail sectors. Committed to the highest standards of service quality, professionalism and architecture, Stephen George + Partners has designed and delivered a portfolio that is rich in both complexity and scale. Working in partnership, its strong client base is evidence of its ability to respond rapidly to stakeholder requirements, resolve complex site issues and produce innovative designs.
www.stephengeorge.co.uk