

And the 25th group to join the Federation is... Bristol Green Doors

Bristol Green Doors is the 25th group to join the Federation of Open Home Networks!

Federation Director John Daggart said: "It's a real pleasure to welcome such an influential group on board. They've years of experience of running successful events and I'm sure their involvement in Bristol 2015 European Green Capital will make them an inspiring contributor."

The Federation held its first quarterly meeting in August 2013. At that point five groups were involved. Since then membership has grown to 25 groups. These represent over 1300 households that are actively sharing the benefits of energy saving home improvements through open days, tours, videos, articles, seminars, conversations and more.

Bristol Green Doors has flourished over the last five years under the charismatic leadership of Dan Weisselberg, Kate Watson and Tom Beale. Together they have run major projects such as the LEAF-funded *Tackling the Terrace* (a test bed for solid wall insulation) and the mentoring of new open homes groups as part of *Ready for Retrofit* and *Green Open Homes*, as well as annual open homes events.

Fundraising

Thanks to support from the Climate Change Collaboration (CCC) the Federation has been able to represent its members before DECC and potential sponsors and funders. The aim is to attract funding members could not normally access on their own.

Federation Chairman Andrew Warren said: "It's vital that green open home groups attract sustainable funding over a longer time frame. We think there's a real opportunity here for commercial sponsors as well as central government."

Over the last year, the Federation has made grant applications, met sponsors, held member meetings and collated important research. In the first 12 months of CCC funded activity from summer 2014, the Federation **succeeded in raising a further £45,000** from DECC. £37,500 of this has now been granted to green open home groups running events.

Recruitment and Representation

By growing its membership the Federation puts itself in a stronger position to negotiate sponsorship arrangements with a national commercial brand. The speed of membership growth demonstrates that the Federation is meeting a genuine need.

Research

Papers have been written on topics such as fundraising, sponsorship and visitor impacts. Visitor impact research has been collated. This yielded plentiful evidence that green open home events offering a touch and feel experience both inspire visitors and give them the confidence to green their own homes. 97% of 177 respondents to a survey by Bath Green Homes said they found their visit "useful" or "inspiring". Around one third of all visitors are ready to invest over £5000 in energy saving improvements. These high levels of satisfaction and confidence are due to the unbiased user feedback received from real homeowners.

The Federation will be working with the National Energy Foundation and the Centre for Sustainable Energy to realise plans to help ensure a sustainable future for all green open home groups. We must secure support for this valuable grass roots activity to increase retrofits and reduce carbon emissions in the UK.

For more information, please phone Gordon Glass on 01908 256922 or email gordon.glass@foohns.org.uk

Editor's Notes: Background information on organisations and individuals

Federation of Open Home Networks

The Federation encourages green open home groups who have already run an event and intend to run another to apply for membership through the FOOHNS website. The Federation's current membership includes Bath Green Homes, Brighton and Hove Eco Open Houses, Bristol Green Doors, Energy Saving Trust, Faringdon Eco Trail, Lewes Eco Open Houses, Marches Energy Agency, Monmouthshire Eco Open Doors, Southampton Open Homes Weekend, SuperHomes, Surrey Green Homes and Transition West Bridgford's Eco House Group.

For more information, see the [Federation website](#).

Climate Change Collaboration

The Climate Change Collaboration is a group of four [Sainsbury Family Charitable Trusts](#). The Trusts are: [Ashden Trust](#), JJ Charitable Trust, Mark Leonard Trust and Tedworth Trust. This group came together in 2011 to support pilot and research projects to find ways of reducing CO₂ emissions quickly. There is a strong emphasis on partnership and collaboration for any funded programme. Trustees insist that projects work together to share their learning with each other and more broadly with key stakeholders.

National Energy Foundation

The National Energy Foundation is an independent charity based in Milton Keynes, and has been at the forefront of improving the use of energy in buildings since 1988. NEF aims to give people, organisations and government the knowledge, support and inspiration they need to understand and improve the use of energy in buildings. The Sustainable Energy Academy merged with the National Energy Foundation in March 2014, having worked closely together to deliver the SuperHomes project since 2007.