

May/June 2014

[View this email in your browser](#)

# activehouse newsletter

## News



### Active House Secretariat moves to Brussels

With the new Strategy for 2014-2016 the Alliance entered new phase with the focus on sector and market influence based on the Active House vision and principles. As of 1 April a new Secretariat team from cabinet DN based in Brussels assists us in promoting the Active House vision, raising awareness of the Alliance, strengthening external communications and facilitating sector and market development. The previous host of the Secretariat, SBRCURnet in the Netherlands will continue to work with us in the Active House Board of Directors.

*Picture Copyright: © Parlement Européen. ASP architecte AEL, PHS Architecte, Association des architectes du CIC : sprl C.R.V., s.a. CDG sprl Studieg*

### Active House on a tour in Italy

The Active House Alliance Members: VELUX and Rockwool organised a series of conferences for architects and designers in Italy, focusing on the Active House design. All conferences included presentations from the participating companies and the Active House Alliance was invited to give a general presentation on the development of Active Houses, the specification and demonstration projects.

The conference was organised in 19 different cities of Italy with close to 15.000 participants.

Read more on the Active House [website](#).



### The Active House Alliance meets the Minister of Housing in the Netherlands

The Active House Alliance was invited to join a national conference focusing on the implementation of Nearly Zero Energy Buildings in Europe. The conference was hosted by the Danish Embassy in Den Haag, and supported by the Active House members VELUX, Grundfos and Rockwool as well as Danfoss. The Minister for Housing in the Netherlands Mr Blok gave a presentation on the developments in the buildings sector and the status of the implementation of the EU legislation in this area in the Netherlands. The Minister pointed out the need to focus on the benefits of better buildings. The Alliance presented the vision of Active House and supported the position of Minister Blok, with a higher focus on solutions that benefit development of better

buildings.

Read more on the Active House [website](#).

## European Parliament elections

Between 22-25 May voters in 28 EU Member States were choosing 751 candidates to take seats in the European Parliament for the next five years. With the new procedure the next European Commission President will come from a party that won the elections which was the EPP (centre-right), with 215 seats. The Socialists obtained 189 seats, followed by the Liberals with 71 seats and the Greens with 53 seats. The far-right euro-sceptics now represent about 15% of the European Parliament. The European Institutions in the new term will work intensively on the issues of key importance for the Active House such as the energy and climate policy framework and the resource efficiency with the buildings sector featuring high on the policy agenda. The goal of the Active House Alliance will be to raise awareness of its vision among the newly elected EU decision-makers responsible for the relevant legislation.



Picture Copyright: © European Union 2011 PE-EP

## Quarterly Interview

Back in 2007 the European Commission proposed the 2020 plan for energy efficiency, renewable energy and CO2 reductions as well as the framework for nearly zero energy buildings by 2020.



**You have worked with Active House since the beginning. Can you explain the background of the establishment of the alliance?**

Back in 2007 the European Commission proposed the 2020 plan for energy efficiency, renewable energy and CO2 reductions as well as the framework for nearly zero energy buildings by 2020.

This was an ambitious plan and several partners in the construction sector agreed that this was a challenge that we should meet. However, the partners also pointed out that in addition to energy reduction emphasis, there was a need for development of buildings with a focus on the indoor climate and environmental impacts.

In order to combine political ambitions, with the identified needs the companies moved together and developed the Active House Vision that balances Comfort, Energy and Environment. A few years later the official establishment of the Active House Alliance took place and since then we have grown to the level where we are today.

### **What differentiates the Active House Alliance from other construction alliances?**

With our approach to buildings we are an alliance that covers many stakeholders in the construction sector and not a specific group like manufacturers or designers.

Firstly, our vision focuses on the development of future buildings based on a holistic view of combining Comfort, Energy and Environment. It is a vision that most partners in the construction sector from universities, manufacturers, architects and developers to the house owners and end-users can support.

Secondly, we have chosen an approach that does not exclude any technologies or solutions. Our approach to buildings is that any material or product should be possible to use. It is the overall performance of the building that should be evaluated and count for the environmental load, energy

performance or comfort level.

### **What is the new strategy focusing on?**

Our new strategy for 2014-2016 was approved at the General Assembly in London during ECObuild. It focuses on 5 main topics.

We will lobby to get the Active House principles included in the building legislation at EU level through our activities in Brussels. We will also strengthen the co-operation with organisations working with the same philosophy, issues and target groups as our Alliance. We must increase the number of Active House projects and demonstrate how they are affordable, commercially viable solutions that can be replicated. We want to demonstrate that Active House buildings are attractive for investors, consultants, private home owners and end-users. Finally, we plan to develop the relevant tools that support architects and engineers in the design of Active Houses and in their dialogue with customers.

The above strategy covers a wide range of activities. It will require focus from the alliance and support from the members. We are progressing well with the development of guidelines and classification tools. Our next workshop in Brussels will focus on that.

### **What is the value for new members of the alliance?**

**Influence.** Membership of the alliance gives influence on the development of the alliance as well as a possibility to join relevant working groups, which develop the common tools for members. By joining those groups, the members ensure that their own vision is included in the common products, developed by the alliance.

**Tools.** Membership allows members to use the tools that are developed for members only. It is the intention to develop simple calculation tools and classification tools, which will be available for members.

**Knowledge and demonstration.** Members become a part of a network which develops the vision of future buildings. They can join relevant demonstration projects and support them with their technology and solutions. They are also able to take advantage of knowledge sharing between members. Being part of the alliance is also an opportunity to meet other partners in the sector and where relevant, create common business activities.

**Public affairs and network.** Members will get access to the large network that the alliance has built up among organisations and partners in the sector. They will also be able to work with the EU and national authorities on developing concepts which can later be included in the legislation in the construction sector.

### **Why did the alliance move its Secretariat to Brussels?**

In the first years we focused on establishment of the alliance and we were strongly supported in this work by the secretariat in the Netherlands. The old secretariat did a tremendously good job in this sense and among others; they established the national network in the Netherlands, which is now progressing.

With the new strategy, where we focus more on the political activities, international communication and network, and have set a medium-term target to grow as an alliance, our board decided to evaluate the possibility to be established in Brussels. It is the expectation that we have a better opportunity to develop the alliance from Brussels, where we have better access to some of our international partners and the EU Institutions.

---

## **From the Alliance**

### **Board of Directors (BOD) and Board Advisory Committee (BAC)**

The Active House Advisory Board will meet on 24 June in Brussels. In addition to the progress achieved in the last months and upcoming activities, the BOD will also elect the Chair and Vice-Chair. The BAC meeting will take place the following day, on 25 June with a particular focus on

guidelines, classification, specification and alliance growing.

## Guideline Workshop

On 23 June in Brussels the Active House is organising a workshop on development of the Active House Concept Guideline. The guideline will aim to provide the architects and engineers with relevant information about Active House to ensure that the concept of their project is prepared for an evaluation in accordance with the Active House specifications and radar. A final review of the guideline will be carried out by the Active House Alliance and external consultants and experts. It is expected to publish the first version of the guidelines by October 2014. If you would like to participate in the Guideline Workshop, please contact the Secretariat.



If you are interested in becoming a member, please e-mail the [secretariat](#) for more information.

## Upcoming Webinars

26 August - Financing of an Active House project in the US

24 September - Designing and living in a Mediterranean Active House: first assessment on climate and users impact on energy and indoor comfort

## Interesting Case

Do you have an Active House case you would like to share with other website viewers? Please feel free to upload your case to our website. It's free and easy. Follow these simple [instructions](#).

**activehouse**.INFO  
NETWORK AND KNOWLEDGE SHARING

## Events



### European Union Sustainable Energy Week 2014

Launched in 2006 as an initiative of the European Commission, the EU Sustainable Energy Week (EUSEW) has become a reference point for public authorities, energy agencies, private companies, NGOs and industry associations engaged in helping to meet the EU's energy and climate goals. The Active House will participate in several sessions during the Week, among others Positive Energy Buildings - wishful thinking or (built) reality? on 26 June and will also organise a Workshop on Guidelines on 23 June.

For more information, please see: <http://www.eusew.eu/>

### Solar Decathlon Europe 2014

The 2014 European Solar Decathlon will be held in

Versailles, France, in a temporary and sustainable micro-city called La Cité du Soleil. It will take place between 14 June and 19 July 2014. Six specific points will be emphasised in this edition, addressing the fundamentals of the ecological energy transitions: density, mobility, sobriety, innovation, affordability, local context. The participants will be judged in ten contests including: architecture, energy efficiency and innovation among others. The Active House Alliance will be present with a poster and panel debate on the national day, 30 June.

For more information, please see:

<http://www.solardecathlon2014.fr/en>

## **35<sup>th</sup> AIVC Conference**

The conference devoted to “Ventilation and airtightness in transforming the building stock to high performance” will take place in Poznań, Poland on 24-25 September 2014. The major themes of the conference will focus on the thermal comfort and ventilative cooling, air infiltration through leaks in the building envelope and ductwork and ventilation in relation to Indoor Air Quality and health. Active House will participate with a session and two members will also present papers during the conference.

## **World SB14 Barcelona Conference**

The conference under the theme: “Sustainable Building Results...Are We Moving as Quickly as We should? It's up to us!” will take place in Barcelona on 28-30 October 2014. The goal of the World SB14 Barcelona Conference is to encourage the uptake of adequate answers to the challenges, social and environmental, which the building sector faces. The building sector acts locally, solving problems on a local and regional scale, but must face challenges on a global scale that compel considering, in an integrated and complex way. Active House activities are being evaluated and the Alliance will organise one or more sessions and will present a paper during the conference.

For more information, please see:

<http://www.wsb14barcelona.org/index.html>

---

# Members



Become a member of the Alliance

## Press and communication



@activehouseinfo



AH network



AH Alliance-members

**activehouse**.INFO  
NETWORK AND KNOWLEDGE SHARING

[www.activehouse.info](http://www.activehouse.info)

The Active House Secretariat is hosted by  
Cabinet DN | rue d'Arlon 25 | 1050  
Brussels | Belgium.  
Email: [secretariat@activehouse.info](mailto:secretariat@activehouse.info)  
Contact person is Stella Brožek-Everaert



Share



Tweet



Forward to Friend

Copyright © 2014 Active House, All rights reserved.