

May 2015

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activehouse newsletter

News



Why is Active House different? - New Guidelines launched

The Active House Alliance launched its new Guidelines on building design at its General Assembly on 23 March 2015 in Brussels. For this special occasion the yearly gathering of Active House members was open for like-minded companies and organisations of the construction sector. The Guidelines document is intended to be used in the conceptual design stage of an Active House. Implementing the basic rules described in there is expected to help architects and engineers to produce more sustainable buildings, adapted to future demands. More specifically, it allows construction experts to better focus on the three main indicators that make a building sustainable: Comfort, Energy and Environment. Furthermore, it takes into account topics that should be considered in the very early design phase as well as it discusses essential principles that influence the performance of an Active House. To complement the Guidelines, the Active House Specifications, the Active House Radar and Calculation tool operate as specific tools to measure the ambition and the performance of an Active House described in the Guidelines.

Reinforced partnership between Active House and the German AktivPlus e. V.

The Active House Alliance held its Board of Directors meeting on 23 March in Brussels. Within this framework the German AktivPlus e.V. presented its vision and activities towards developing future standards for the building and construction sector by taking into account the wellbeing and comfort of the users. This has been followed by a discussion between the representatives of the two like-minded associations on how to reinforce their collaboration in order to be able to join forces to promote positive energy buildings and indoor comfort.

Based on the endeavours which proved to be aligned, Active House decided to propose a seat in its Board of Directors to Prof. Dr. Natalie Eßig, member of the AktivPlus e.V. in order to be able to better coordinate the messages and actions towards the common objectives.





Active House Denmark as recognised player in the national market

Active House Denmark (i.e. AktivHus Denmark) is a new chapter of the Active House Alliance launched on 29 October 2014. Signalling its kick off, it has held its first conference on 15 January. By this step it became an official player in the Danish market for design tools in the sustainable construction sector. On this occasion, more than 60 stakeholders met up to participate in the foundation of the society in which the international Active House Alliance has got hands on the formation last year. At the conference on sustainable buildings, the initiative was welcome by the Climate, Energy and Building Minister Rasmus Petersen, whose presence marked the importance of the newly born association. The new Danish network's main objective is to increase awareness and experience of building and creating healthy and comfortable houses while respecting the environment. As an ultimate goal, it strives that sustainable buildings become builder's natural choice in the future.

New European Commission energy strategy to pay special attention to the building sector

Following up on the recent foreign affairs developments at our Eastern neighbours, Europe made it a priority to reduce its dependency and further increase its energy efficiency. For this reason on 25 February, the European Commission launched an Energy Union Package, a new Framework Strategy for a Resilient Energy Union with a forward-looking climate change policy. This will pave the way for actions to European decision makers in the coming years. Among others, in its new strategy the Commission confirmed that it will pay special attention to those sectors with huge energy efficiency potential including the buildings sector. It has also underlined that it will further establish synergies between energy efficiency policies and the circular economy, helping Europe to transform into a more competitive resource-efficient economy. In order to realize its ambitious goals, among others the Commission will review its relevant energy efficiency legislations – including the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD) and the Energy Efficiency Directive (EED). Furthermore it will come up with a dedicated strategy for heating and cooling, which is currently the largest single source of energy demand in Europe. In addition, the Commission will develop a “Smart Financing for Smart Buildings” initiative to facilitate the access to funding instruments and therefore encourage renovation works.



Call for papers for the Sustainable Built Environment Conference 2016 in Hamburg

The organisers of the Sustainable Built Environment (SBE) Conference 2016 in Hamburg announced a call for papers for the SBE16 Hamburg: entitled “Strategies – Stakeholders –

Success factors”, which remains open until 30 May. The conference will be held from 8 to 11 March 2016 and marks the start of the SBE Conference series on regional level in 2016 in preparation for the next SBE World Conference 2017 in Hong Kong. As part of the call, research as well as practice oriented contributions are encouraged on new and innovative concepts of sustainability in the building sector and the sustainable development of neighbourhoods. For detailed description of the conference topics and further information please see the Call for Papers [here](#).

Quarterly Interview

In March the Active House Alliance issued its Guidelines on building design. An important element of the concept is indoor comfort besides energy and environment. This time, we asked Emmanuel Valentin, International market & innovation manager at Saint Gobain Glass, member of Active House, to elaborate this issue in our Quarterly interview.



1. What exactly does the Active House vision mean by indoor comfort and what does it include?

First, indoor comfort is more and more important as people spend most of their time indoor to live, play, sleep or to work. In such a context, ensure well-being is crucial but must also answer to sustainable energy and responsible environment management challenges of our society. Active House promotes indoor comfort as healthy, comfortable climate and easy to control for occupants. As a summary good indoor comfort is key for our long term health!

2. How does indoor comfort appear in the new Active House

Guidelines?

Indoor comfort appears in the Active House guidelines as a way to allow people to live all the day, every season in a comfortable building according to human needs. The Active House Guidelines put people as a central concern and explains how to design a building accordingly. Indoor comfort is an important part of Active House Guideline as it ensures to move from pure energy saving design to energy efficient and comfortable building which are the building of the future.

3. What are the relevant quantitative and qualitative criteria of indoor comfort described by the Guidelines?

There are typically three criteria for indoor comfort in the Active House Guidelines. The first one is a good daylight (or visual comfort) level. Natural light has a demonstrated impact on Human health and well-being and indirect impact on the quality of sleep, the productivity or the recovery. The second one is to have Thermal comfort over both winter and summer periods. Thermal management is an ancestral human concern and must be adapted for each area/rooms of the house. To achieve healthy indoor environment, Visual and Thermal comfort must be combined with good air quality as we all need to breath!

4. How does Active House and its tools measure these criteria and how to ensure it?

These criteria clearly have to be measurable by well-defined and easy to understand parameters. For example, amount of daylight available at horizontal work place height or Maximum/Minimum operative Temperatures are typical way to evaluate the criteria. More important is the way to reach such criteria. The Active House Criteria provide simple recommendations to reach these, like take into account location and climate or optimise window size/position and performance for Daylight criteria. It is important to describe the principles but much more important to know how to improve!

5. How do Active House members as Saint Gobain work with the new Active House Guidelines with special regard to indoor comfort?

Saint-Gobain is fully convinced the building industry is moving towards more sustainable construction and that building has huge environmental and social impacts. Social aspect of course includes indoor comfort as occupant is at the center of the game. In this scope, Saint-Gobain develops innovative solutions to build and renovate energy efficient, comfortable, healthy buildings like glasses allowing good daylight without sacrificing insulation and therefore thermal comfort.

6. Who can have access the new Active House Guidelines to learn more about the related vision and be able to better optimize the buildings already in the design process?

Everybody can have access to the new Active House Guidelines! It brings answers to basic questions as well as to more complex questions from Architects or building professionals. Such a clear and well-structured document is the result of a combined effort/knowledge and I would like to thank all contributors!

From the Alliance

Schmidt hammer lassen



In March 2015, schmidt hammer lassen became member of the Active House Alliance. With more than 25 years of experience, schmidt hammer lassen architects is one of Scandinavia's most recognised, award-winning architectural practices committed to innovative and sustainable design. Schmidt hammer lassen architects has established an international reputation for projects that interact with their urban context. The practice places particular emphasis on the use of natural light as an integral part of the design process. The functionality – meeting the specific needs of the users – is also key, as are all aspects of sustainability. Where possible, the practice explores the vital relationship between art, design and architecture.

Active House Netherlands



In March 2015 also Active House Netherlands joined the international Active House Alliance. The national Active House brunch was established in November 2013 to promote the Active House values and vision in the Netherlands. The local association also plays key role in the implementation of the Active House concept through its established demonstration projects and actions. The Dutch alliance has been launched by sixteen partners as follows: Aldus bouwinnovatie, Aralco, BBA binnenmilieu, Blyweert Aluminium BV, BouwhulpGroep, Duco, Glassolutions Saint Gobain, IBM Vastgoedregie, KAW/e architecten, Nieman Raadgevende Ingenieurs, Rockwool, SBRCURnet, Slim Bouwen, Van der Hulst Bouwprojekten BV, VELUX Nederland and Zehnder Group NL.

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](#).



Election of new Active House board members

At the Active House General Assembly on 23 March, the new Board of Directors (BOD) and Advisory Committee (BAC) have been voted and members were given discharge for the upcoming period. The election of members for a 2 year period has taken place with the following results:

Board of Advisory Group:

- VELUX Group, Michael K. Rasmussen (2014-2016) (Chair)
- Aalborg University, Per Heiselberg (2014-2016)
- Cenergia, Peder Vejsig (2014-2016)
- Great Golf Homes, Tad Putyra (2014-2016)
- Grundfos Holding, Henrik Kjeldgaard (2014-2016)
- HTA, Rory Bergin (2015-2017)
- Building Performance Institute Europe, Director Oliver Rapf (2015-2017)
- ROCKWOOL International, Vice President Communication and PR Benoit Passard (2015-2017)
- Schmidt Hammer Lassen architects, MAA/ARB/RIBA/AIA Founding Partner Morten Schmidt (2015-2017)

Board of Directors:

- Somfy, Richard Beuhorry (2015-2017) (Chair)
- AAEC, Emilia-Cerna Mladin (2014-2016)
- FEMIB, Anders Isaksson (2014-2016)
- Grundfos, Carsten Østergård Pedersen (2014-2016)
- VELUX Group, Mikkel Skott Olsen/Ulrich Bang (2014-2016)
- VFF, Franz Hauk (2014-2016)
- Hunter Douglas, Pieter van Rees (2014-2016)
- SBRCURnet, Cindy Vissering (2014-2016)
- ROCKWOOL International, Connie Enghus (2015-2017)
- Saint Gobain Glass, Emmanuel Valentin (2015-2017)
- DTU-Byg, Carsten Rode (2015-2017)
- AktivPlus, Prof. Dr. Natalie Eßig (2015-2017)

Events



Workshop on Healthy Building with the Active House vision at Healthy Buildings Europe Conference

Within the framework of the Healthy Buildings Europe Conference 2015 to take place in Eindhoven, The Netherlands, on 20 May the Active House Alliance will hold a Workshop entitled "Healthy building with the Active House vision". The Workshop will discuss the question: "With what arguments can building owners or tenants invest in their building to make it into a healthy building?" Moderators will include: Atto Harsta, Aldus Bouwinnovatie, the Netherlands and Kurt Emil Eriksen, Velux, Denmark as well as presentation will be delivered by Jelle Laverge, Ghent University, Belgium.



AktivPlus Symposium 2015 in Germany – free entrance tickets available

The AktivPlus Symposium 2015 will be held during the CEB (Clean Energy Building) Expo in Stuttgart, Germany taking place from 20 until 22 May 2015. At the event AktivPlus e.V. will present the state of play of its interdisciplinary work towards developing standards for the building and construction sector with the support of its four working groups dedicated to Energy, Users, Life cycle, and Integration of key actors. The panel discussion entitled “1 million AktivPlus building until 2020! How do standards become applicable on the market” will then try to explore the key issues on the field, namely the implementation and acceptance of standards by users. At the Symposium also Active House will outline its approach and vision on 21 May. For a free entrance ticket to the event, please fill in the application form [here](#).



European Sustainable Energy Week 2015

The European Sustainable Energy Week (EUSEW) 2015 will take place in Brussels on 16-18 June and will gather together thousands of energy experts, policy-makers, representatives of civil society, and the media from the EU and beyond to debate secure, clean and efficient energy. The conference will include policy sessions organised by the European Commission and relevant stakeholders - including the Active House Alliance - and will host an interactive exhibition and networking village as well as the Sustainable Energy Awards Ceremony 2015. Within the framework of the EUSEW, side events and activities will take place during the whole month of June in diverse locations all over Europe.

Members



In cooperation with:



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