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activehouse newsletter

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Highlight

Centennial Park- news from the Ibbtson family's journey into the very first certified Active House

This summer the Ibbtson family- Bethany, Russel and their three daughters moved into the Active House Centennial Park for six months. The aim is to test and report on what it means living in an Active House which focusses on indoor comfort, a healthy environment and energy efficiency. They will also conduct experiments while monitoring the home's energy consumption.

I live in my own little Active House world, not a bad world to be in, but I do find it at odds with what I am used to, what I have come to think of how I live. I no longer feel an urgency each morning to get out and into the world.



"I still find it hard to believe that I get to wake up and live in Active House Centennial Park for the next 6 months!!" writes Bethany in her first blog few days after having moved in. She describes her move as being in no way stressful - probably thanks also to the Active House environment: "My first full day in Active House, and I can truthfully say that it was relaxing. Not something I typically say after hauling all our belongings and three kids into a new abode and spending the day unpacking and cleaning, but it was. Was it the lack of 'projects' lurking in the background, the fact that there was space for everything, the clutter-less shelves, the abundant light that softly lit the rooms or the fact that the outdoors was everywhere I looked? A hard question to answer in the first week but one worth investigating." And she wonders: "As the weeks fly by as they always do in summer, the novelty of the space will diminish leaving only three questions to answer; is it the design, the daylight, or the volume of space that is making life in an Active House less stressful?"

recently helped me to take some light measurements in the kitchen, living room, and dining room on an overcast day. We measured an average of 1% daylight factor on the kitchen island, 3% on the dining room table, and 4% on the living room coffee table. But with the bright spaces and light colouring, the kitchen feels even brighter.” tells Bethany.

“The brightness of Active House Centennial Park is something you can really get used to, and I already have.” concludes Bethany.

Follow more stories about the comfort of living in an Active House [here](#).



The 5th Active House Symposium goes to Italy in November

Active House will organise its 5th Symposium on 14-15 November at Lake Garda in Italy to discuss sustainable building design with Italian and International architects and designers. During the two-day event there will be a specific focus on sustainable development on city and building level, as well as on indoor comfort issues and the Active House principles, including the development of the Active House Label.

The program will include keynotes and presentations from international architects and researchers among others Georg Bechter ZT, Georg Bechter Architektur+Design; Dipl.-Ing. Dr. Peter Holzer Institute of Building Research & Innovation; Architect MAA, M.Arch Sinus Lynge Partner and founder of EFFEKT (TBC) ; Norbert Lantschner, Founder of CasaClima and president of Fondazione Climabita; Architect MAA Lone Feifer, Program Director the VELUX Group.

The winner of the Active House Contest will be announced, as well as an interactive visit to the [Garda Lake House](#), designed by Architect Eileen Meyer and built by respecting the Active House principles, will be included in the official programme.

The symposium will be set up together with ActiveHouseItalia and the local community. It will be classified as a part of the Italian education program for architects and follow their national education program, giving architects education credits for participating.

For more information and the programme, please see [here](#).



Active House working for you

Active House label contest: get involved and apply now!

The clock is ticking and you'd better hurry up if you haven't submitted your project to win a free Active House label yet! Only one week to go before the closing of the competition! The deadline to submit your application is 1 October.

A jury will shortlist five projects that will go through to the last phase of the competition. The shortlisted applications will be invited to provide further information on the Active House criteria. This will help to select the final winner, which will be announced during the Active House Symposium in November in Italy. The jury will be international and among others include Rory Bergin, Partner, Sustainable Futures, HTA Design LLP (UK), Prof. Marco Imperadori, Politecnico di Milano (I) and Duzan Doepel Partner, Doepel Strijkers Architects (NL) from the Active House network (*further members tbc*).

To submit your project, send your application to the Active House Secretariat: secretariat@activehouse.info. For further information about the competition see [here](#), and to get inspiration from the submitted proposals consult the contesting applications [here](#).

Active House Board outlines its action plan until the end of the year

On 1 September the Active House Board members held a meeting to take stock of the main activities of the Alliance during the first half of the year – including the state of the Active House Label and related projects and trainings, as well as the ongoing Active House Awards - and agreed on an action plan for the rest of 2016. Among others, they took a decision to organise the 5th Active House Symposium in Italy, and agreed that the

Active House webinar series on calculation and verification

During the second half of August, the Active House Alliance organised webinars on the calculation of the Active House radar in two rounds. On 24-25 August, and on 30-31 August partners from Europe and China were invited to learn more about the Active House Specification and the requirements, methodologies and levels for comfort, energy and environment, and were also given a presentation with case examples on the calculation of the actual level of these indicators. Last, but not least, they were provided with useful information about the application process for the Active House Label and the verification procedure. The webinars were set up in cooperation with the Danish Technological Institute, who carried out the education program.

Based on the success of these events, the Alliance will hold further webinars on 19-20 October concentrating on partners in North America. On 21 November and 12 December online workshops will be set up with a special focus on the procedure for those who wish to be involved as a verifying expert. For upcoming events and webinars see [here](#).

RenovActive project to be awarded with the second Active House Label

Following the first Active House labelled project in Canada called Centennial Park, the second label has been given to the RenovActive project in Anderlecht, Belgium.

The main criteria for RenovActive has been: affordable, easy to reproduce and scalable. The aim of the renovation project was to test the Active House principles in social housing and single-family homes where cost, comfort and energy efficiency have to go hand in hand. The main goal of RenovActive is to prove the financial viability of Active House renovation in social housing schemes across Europe and to develop a sustainable concept suitable for large-scale renovation and modernisation, i.e. a concept that could be replicated in financial and technical terms. The project include solutions from the Active House members, VELUX, RENSON, SOMFY, Saint Gobain and Grundfos. For further information, please see [here](#).



Interview with Eileen Meyer, architect of the Gardalake House in Italy



This month we interviewed Eileen Meyer, the architect who designed the Gardalake House, a private residence on two levels situated in northern Italy close to the Lake Garda, which will be open for visitors during the Active House Symposium in November. Looking for a deep interaction with the lake and its natural surroundings, the energy efficiency of this nearly zero energy building was only one of the ingredients involved in planning. In the interview she explains how she got inspired for the project and why she decided to participate to the Active House label contest.

AH: Can you describe how the idea of the Gardalake House was born?

EM: The idea was born in a natural way, Austrian clients had the wish to build a new villa on their property. The specifications had been very rigorous. Form and size of the ground plan were just given by the authority. Same for the orientation of the house with the panoramic view to north because of the lakes position. The requirements of the owners have been: a minimal maintenance of the house technic, easy to handle because of the only temporary use of the house during the vacation period. A good summer but also winter indoor climate.

AH: What are the main elements which inspired you to create the Gardalake House?

EM: My personal aim was really to inspire construction companies and craftsman like colleagues to open their mind and to arouse their interest for the passive house standard. Regarding the architectural criteria, I had one vision just during the first site inspection in my mind. When opening the door, the sensation must be like entering into another world that connects you suddenly with the surrounding nature. In the back you leave the village with streets, traffic and buildings and in front of you a beautiful and silent landscape of mountain and lake encompasses you *making you part of it. It's like a filter function.*

AH: What is so special about this house?

EM: The speciality of this house is justified in the high daylight quality and the direct relationship with the nature

EM: Special because of the simple design of the house! The design is really basic with simple divisions but at the same time smart details makes it very peculiar. Transparency, landscape and communication-vectors are the key words that guided the planning.

AH: What does comfort mean for you?

EM: A number of criteria define comfort for me. For example, high daylight factor also during summer, when usually in the southern climate zones the houses are protected from sunlight by shading systems reducing the daylight quality. Continuous distribution of temperature in all the living spaces, to avoid discomfort during winter just like during summer is also important. Good distribution of spaces with good relationship between indoor and outdoor matters as well. And most importantly no headache in the morning caused by exhausted air is a real sign of indoor comfort!



Developments on sustainable buildings

European Commission opens consultation on a framework for building indicators

The European Commission's 2014 Communication on Resource Efficiency Opportunities in the Building Sector - supported by the Circular Economy Action Plan as of 2015 - identified the need for a common EU approach to the assessment of the environmental performance of buildings, in order to facilitate the comparison between buildings and encourage design improvements that will reduce their environmental impacts. For this, decision makers consider that a 'common framework of core indicators' should be the starting point, which designers could use through large demonstration projects.

As part of the process, the Commission launched a stakeholder consultation entitled 'Towards a common EU framework of core indicators for the environmental performance of buildings', which remains open until 7

together with a draft proposal for the indicators will be discussed at a working group meeting of the 'project stakeholder group' on 30 November, where the Active House Alliance will be represented by the Secretary General. To submit your input and for more information on the public consultation see [here](#).



Events

Active House Symposium 14-15 November 2016

In collaboration with ActiveHouseItalia, the Active House Alliance will organise its 5th Symposium on 14-15 November at Lake Garda in Italy to discuss sustainable building design with Italian and International architects and designers. During the two-day event there will be a specific focus on sustainable development on city and building level, as well as on indoor comfort issues and the Active House principles, including the development of the Active House Label. For more details see [here](#).

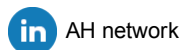
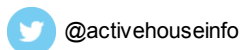
For more upcoming events in 2016 consult the [Active House Events Calendar](#) [here](#).

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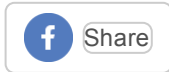
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