



PRESS RELEASE

London Leader sets up new community to address sustainability in private sector housing

Local authorities, NGOs, policy makers and housing professionals to join together in a collaborative working community

City Hall, London – 4 July 2008: London Leader Mark Johnson, one of 15 Leaders selected to champion sustainability in the city by the London Sustainable Development Commission, is setting up London's first private sector housing sustainability community, called Sustain 72.

Sustain 72 was officially launched today at City Hall, with attendees including representatives from London councils, the voluntary sector, energy suppliers and fuel poverty groups. Sustain 72 takes its name from the fact that 72% of London's homes are in private occupancy, and therefore tackling this sector is fundamental to improving quality of life and improving London's long term sustainability.

40% of London's carbon emissions are produced by existing housing stock and if London is to meet its aim to be a world-class sustainable city and improve the well-being of all its residents, it must address the issues facing private sector housing such as fuel poverty, climate change, income maximisation, empty properties and waste management. Sustain 72 seeks to tackle this by bringing together existing housing organisations, local authorities, NGOs and policy makers; creating an online community (www.sustain72.org.uk) to provide a collaborative network for coordinating projects in the private housing sector.

Mark Johnson, Operations Director at London Warm Zone and the London Leader responsible for the creation of Sustain 72, said: "If we're going to make London a world-class sustainable city, we have to raise the profile of private sector housing. One easy way to make that happen is to unite similar groups with similar goals, showing the relationship between issues like fuel poverty and healthcare for the elderly. If you tackle fuel poverty by giving a home better insulation, a more efficient boiler and a modern fridge-freezer, not only do you reduce carbon emissions, you also save the resident money on their fuel bills and make them warmer and healthier in winter."

Mark Johnson has also set up London's most comprehensive grants promotion scheme to encourage Londoners to take up energy efficiency grants. In the last seven months an unprecedented 13,500 enquiries have been generated from a major communications campaign, resulting in lower fuel bills and reduced carbon emissions for those who were not previously aware that they qualified for grants.

Sustain 72 has six objectives:

- To bring together different organisations in London with a private sector housing remit to promote, champion and raise of the profile of the work being done in the city.

- To provide a platform for groups or individuals to integrate a wider array of services
- To provide a bridge between public and private groups, and between operational and policy professionals for greater understanding; and to provide access to additional resources
- To lobby with partners on relevant or topical issues
- To work collectively to ensure London benefits from potential external funding from Government or other bodies
- To bring people together on a London-wide basis

The Sustain 72 website can be found at www.sustain72.org.uk and is free to join.

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NOTES TO EDITORS:

1. **The London Sustainable Development Commission** was appointed in 2002 to promote sustainable development in London and advise on the sustainability of city-wide strategies. Further information on the work of the Commission can be found here: <http://www.londonsdc.org/>
2. **The London Leaders Programme** was set up by the London Sustainable Development Commission and launched in October 2007. The programme brings together 15 sustainability leaders from across London's sectors and from all walks of life, each committing to undertake a project or an action to demonstrate sustainability in action. The London Leaders programme aims to inspire, motivate and catalyse change to help realise the vision of London as a world class sustainable city. More information on the London Leaders can be found here: <http://www.londonsdc.org/londonleaders/default.aspx>
3. **London Warm Zones Limited**, the parent company of London Warm Zone, is a not-for-profit company wholly owned by the charity National Energy Action. London Warm Zone (LWZ) evolved from the Newham Warm Zone pilot scheme launch in 2001 and has been highly effective in helping householders improve the energy performance of their homes. The not-for-profit structure means that the LWZ approach is consistently based upon the best solution available, rather than maximising income at the expense of customer satisfaction.

For further information and to arrange interviews with the London Leaders please contact:

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