

# The good guys

With sustainability gaining ground in every area of contemporary life, **Tim Hinchliffe** takes a look at the leading campaigners for Green design, all of whom are striving to embed its core principles whenever and wherever they can



SUSTAINABILITY is simply referred to as 'good design', according to those who have adopted the philosophy. In recent years it has become more than a buzz word that is debated and deliberated over. The S-word has been well and truly implemented, whether this be environmental design or inclusive and social design, but, with this in mind, it is difficult to quantify the amount of resources out there.

This list of initiatives, organisations and people practising sustainable design is not exhaustive. The responsibility has been taken on by so many groups that this can only be a positive thing, but who are the leading lights of the Green brigade? Here is an overview of those championing the sustainable cause.

## TIM ASHTON

Though Tim Ashton may not have consciously signed up for sustainability, he really has a flair for it. As creative director at Antidote, his work is not necessarily associated with 'being Green'. However, he is the man behind one of the most memorable eco-campaigns, Anya Hindmarch's 'I'm not a plastic bag'. The campaign was put into action after Ashton worked on the community links project directed by David Robinson, who set up the website We Are What We Do. Antidote designed the books Change the World for a Fiver and Change the World from 9 to 5, which were developed from the Web initiative.

Since then, Ashton has been involved with other eco-projects, including the 'soot' globe for Carbon Sense, and Change the World at 35 000ft, a joint project with Virgin Atlantic and We Are What We Do.



## AUDI DESIGN FOUNDATION

Under development manager Rebecca Edge, the Audi Design Foundation has continued an adventurous programme that focuses on sustainability. The most recent being Sustain our Nation, an initiative to harness all aspects of sustainability in real projects for the UK.

The foundation is known for donating grants through its Design for Life programme which commenced in 1997. The aim is to award some £80 000 in funds a year, with grants ranging from £10 000-£30 000. Other initiatives by ADF include the Designs of Substance initiative that challenges students to consider how to use design to improve the lives or situations of people with little or no money – one example being Max Frommelt's work in the townships of South Africa.



## CLARE BRASS

Co-founder of the Social Environmental Enterprise and Design Foundation with Flora Bowden, Clare Brass has established several design-led initiatives and organisations dealing with social or environmental issues. She was campaign leader at the Design Council from 2004, and leader of sustainability there from 2006-2007. Brass then took up a part-time role at Design London to bring social enterprise and sustainability thinking to business, design and engineering students.

The Seed Foundation has partnered the Policy Studies Institute to launch a Defra-funded research project, HiRise Gardens. The mission of HiRise addresses issues of biodegradable waste and looks at the social concerns of homelessness. The aim is to get a community composting system, the Rocket Composter, installed on every estate in the UK, which is then managed by local, formerly homeless residents.

This action research project will last one year on the Maiden Lane Estate in London's Camden, where Seed will be directly working with the sustainability team at Camden Council and a design team made up of residents on the estate. Workshops for the project started in April.

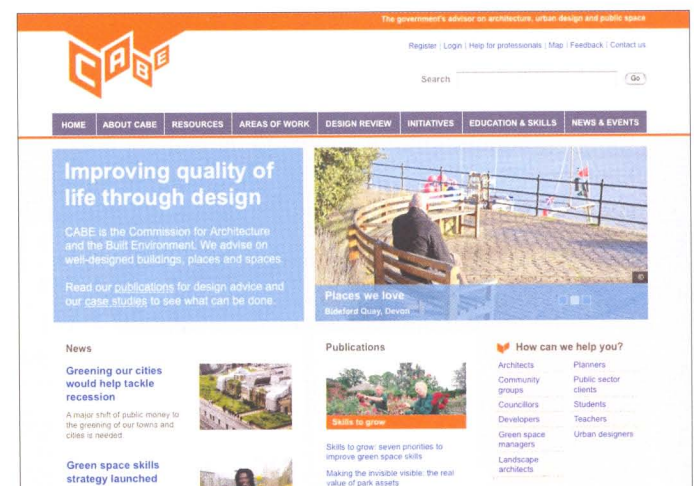


## PROFESSOR MICHAEL BRAUNGART

Professor Michael Braungart is an advocate for sustainability. The German chemist's 'cradle-to-cradle' concept, devised with William McDonough, has become globally significant when it comes to the sustainable cause. The book Remaking The Way We Make Things (2002), written by McDonough and Braungart, calls for the transformation of human industry through design that is ecologically intelligent. Braungart also gives lectures, the most recent being with the office furniture manufacturer Orangebox, which has become the first European company in its sector to achieve cradle-to-cradle accreditation.

## COMMISSION FOR ARCHITECTURE AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment is the Government's adviser on architecture, urban design and public space. The group developed the Sustainable Cities campaign and, in March, Cabi and Natural England brought together planners, design professionals and local practitioners from across the world to discuss the latest thinking on Green infrastructure and to call on the Government to prioritise funding for parks, trees and open spaces in our cities. In response to this, Housing and Planning Minister Margaret Beckett launched Skills to Grow with an announcement of a £1m fund to recruit a new generation of apprentices to nurture England's parks and green spaces.



## MARTIN CHARTER

Martin Charter is a pioneer across sustainable design. His work as director of the Centre for Sustainable Design at the University College for the Creative Arts facilitates discussion and research on eco-design. Last year, Charter chaired eco-innovation workshops and, following this, a network of eco-innovation has brought together a range of eco-entrepreneurs who present the challenges faced when developing Green ideas, before putting the concepts into practice.

## ANNE CHICK

As director of the Sustainable Design Research Centre, a course director of MA Design for Sustainable Development and co-founder of Greengaged with Sophie Thomas, Anne Chick has been going Green for more than 15 years. Co-founder of the Centre for Sustainable Design, she has written Graphic Designer's Greenbook: A Handbook and Source Guide on Design And the Environment, and launched the Design for Development masters course at Kingston University.