



Innovation: designing for a sustainable future

Bedzed: a compromise.

Stephen Peake

BedZED has got a lot of good sustainable design, sustainable technology incorporated into it, whether it be the recycled rainwater systems, whether it be the wood chip gasifier, it could be car sharing scheme; it could be the types of insulation that they've put in there; the integration photovoltaics in the windows; the sophisticated system of recycling the air and obtaining the energy from it, so technologically it's gone really quite far. Even the materials that were used to build it, much of them are green or recycled building materials that the steel in it is from a railway shed in Brighton, or at least some of the steel in it. The wood is from locally sourced green oak for example. We can't do much better at the moment than what Bill Dunster has tried to do with his design. The problem I think with it is that even people who are green minded and sympathetic are going to find living in those particular sunny caves quite different and quite challenging. That building is incredibly air-tight and when you shut the door you feel it and if the heat circulation system has a problem with it or something, you are going to have to get used to a different kind of technology. Also, these sunny caves, they're designed in a very different way from the traditional two, three, four bedroom terraced house and that takes some getting used to, so in putting all these sustainable technologies together in an excellent way he had to in the end compromise in some aspects of traditional British style terraced house living and I think time will only tell as to whether it's going to be successful.