

## Hempcrete – a most sustainable building material, says Tom Woolley at Stockholm seminar

At the end of March 2011 professor Tom Woolley, ARC•PEACE Board member from the UK, visited Sweden. He was invited to the new School of Architecture in Umeå (north Sweden) and used the occasion to visit Swedish Architects Without Borders. His presentation in Stockholm attracted almost 50 participants.

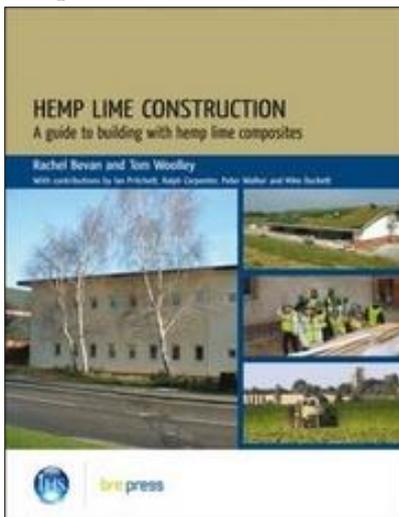


*Tom Woolley at Stockholm seminar.*

Tom Woolley focused on natural building materials, especially hempcrete. This material is a mixture of hemp hurds and lime (possibly including sand, pozzolans or cement). It can be used both for construction and for insulation. Hempcrete is easier to work than traditional lime mixes and acts as an insulator and moisture regulator. It lacks the brittleness of cement and consequently does not need expansion joints, Tom said.

Tom also emphasized that hempcrete is an affordable alternative to synthetic petrochemical-based materials. It is healthy, non-polluting and effective in providing a simple form of building construction that gives a well-insulated building fabric. By using a plant-based renewable material, it is possible to lock up carbon dioxide in the fabric of the building. The construction of a hempcrete house will save 30 to 50 tonnes of carbon dioxide,

compared with a conventional house.



*Wolley's book on hemp construction. Harvesting of hemp. It is mainly grown in France and the UK.*

Tom Woolley is a pioneer of sustainable architecture in the UK. He was one of the founders of the Renewable Building organisation in the UK. He is at present a consultant for Rachel Bevan Architects and a Visiting Professor at the Centre for Alternative Technology Graduate School of the Environment in Northern Ireland. He was the editor of the Green Building Handbook and author of Natural Building and Hemp and Lime Construction. He is a member of the Board of ARC•PEACE and Scientists for Global Responsibility in the UK. Read more about his works at <http://bevanarchitects.com/>

*Hempcrete combined with a load-bearing structure of timber.*

*Dick Urban Vestbro*

