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A look at what's going on at Benfield ATT

‘We Want Wonderful Women!’

Construction Professor Michael Benfield tells House Builders, Developers & Architects in Cardiff

“Don’t put your daughters on the stage, Mrs Worthington - they have far better career prospects building new homes”, an audience of house-builders, developers, architects and other professional advisers at the St David’s Hotel, Cardiff was told this evening.

Linking the Government’s drive to achieve sustainable ‘zero-carbon’ housing output by 2016 (2011 in Wales) with the growth of media studies and similar university courses, outspoken Professor Dr Michael Benfield claimed that “Across the UK the skills, talent and future prospects of thousands of young people, especially young women, are being wasted by not encouraging them to follow really meaningful, productive careers in construction.”

Although much of British industry has been lost, the upcoming changes required in building design, engineering, manufacture and construction are “... opening up fantastic career opportunities for generations to come”, he stated. Predicting that more and more structures would be built ‘Off-Site’ in factories like his own, and merely assembled on site, he continued “We need the wonderful attributes possessed by many women – their mental agility, insights into home-making, ability to multi task, manage budgets, limit waste, eye for design, and so on”

Considering political correctness to have gone too far, he called for Government Ministers to back ‘Positive Discrimination’ to get more women into the house-building and construction industry. “As we move further toward ‘white-coat’ manufacturing environments and clean, waste free, assembly sites, I’m absolutely certain that they will find more job satisfaction and career fulfilment in this industry than in any other.” he said, adding that “With increasingly severe shortages of surveyors, technicians, and engineers, as well as craft and trade skills being commonly acknowledged, we urgently need their extraordinary talents to help us deliver what government wants.”

With international environmental awareness increasingly recognising the need to limit consumption, reduce pollution, save energy and generally “Save the Planet”, the Chartered Environmentalist Professor believes that women are uniquely qualified to make a major contribution to these efforts. Citing the Ambassador Programmes now being run by the Chartered Institute of Building and the Construction Industry Training Board to attract women into construction, he encouraged his audience to “Lend a woman” to these initiatives. They will be trained by these organisations to go out to schools, colleges and universities to both “Show & Tell” young women what a valuable and wonderful future construction holds for them.

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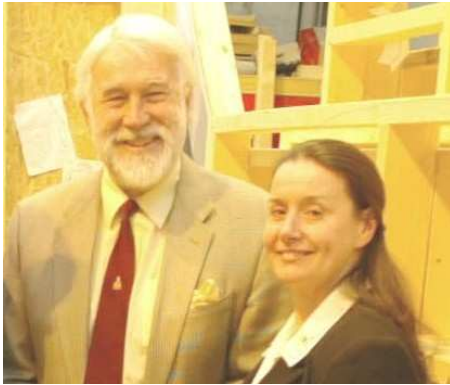
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Professor Benfield on site at ITV's House Race



Professor Michael Benfield &
Freda Sanders the Benfield
ATT Management Team

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Editors Notes

Born in Coventry, Dr Michael Benfield PhD was educated at Warwick School, Loughborough, Coventry and Newcastle Universities. He is visiting Professor of Civil & Construction engineering research with the University of Wales, Newport and Managing Director of the Benfield ATT Group, specialist timber frame engineers, based in Caldicot South Wales. A member of the national New Homes Marketing Board, he also sits on the executive of the Home Builders Federation, Wales, and the WAG / FCW sponsored Wales Forest Business Partnership, for which he chairs Wood Knowledge Wales. This research and information dissemination body is charged with helping the Welsh timber sector achieve World Class status. A Chartered Environmentalist, Chartered Builder, Chartered Surveyor and member of the Institute of Wood Science, he is also one of the four co-founders of the International Green Party movement. Having researched Town & Country Planning and housing issues across Europe and the former Soviet bloc, he speaks internationally on environmental, timber, housing, construction and related issues. As a developer he built the first timber frame houses for sale in the Midlands and promoted the £60k affordable house idea, subsequently taken up by government, through the Birmingham Bull Ring 'House Race' reality TV programmes with ITV Central.

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