

THE SOLAR TRADE ASSOCIATION
PRESS RELEASE
23rd June 2008

Solar going mainstream as the Solar Trade Association celebrates its 30th Anniversary

The Solar Trade Association (STA), which represents the UK's solar thermal industry, is proud to be celebrating its 30th Anniversary this year. To commemorate this important event we are organising a celebratory reception in the Members' Dining Room at the House of Commons on 25th June, hosted by Dr Alan Whitehead MP.

This occasion will be a fantastic opportunity for members to celebrate the successful work of the STA in growing the UK solar thermal market over the last 30 years and in particular:

- providing good customer information
- realising high quality technical and marketing standards
- developing professional training schemes.

It will also prove to be a valuable time for businesses to network and to share past experiences and hopes for the future.

This is an exciting time for the solar industry and the day will bring together many of the key players who have pioneered its development over the past thirty years, as well as and those who will take it forward from today. Speakers will include Malcolm Wicks, the Energy Minister, Gerhard Rabensteiner, President of ESTIF, the European Solar Thermal Industry Federation and Dr Alan Whitehead MP.

Solar Hot Water (SHW) is now ready to go mainstream. Currently there are over 100,000 SHW installations in the UK and the industry is currently growing 50% year-on-year. As gas and electricity prices are set to rise by up to 40% in 2008, SHW represents a good investment for the householder. Solar is also the main zero carbon solution.

Additionally, SHW, with the right support, could have a significant effect in realising much of the 15% renewable energy by the 2020 target. We appreciate the support that has been given to our industry by government to date; some of which such as the Clear Skies scheme have been very successful.

The last 2 years have seen many new initiatives such as the Microgeneration Certification Scheme, the Carbon Emissions Reduction Target and the Code for Sustainable Homes. It is important that the value of solar is recognised in all these schemes, so that we can see consistent long term growth in the solar industry.

Howard Johns, Chairman of the STA, says "We are delighted to be celebrating our 30th anniversary. It is an exciting time for solar thermal in the UK as we see more and more people realising the benefits of using the technology. The combination of rising fuel prices, environmental concerns and energy security issues mean that solar hot water systems will be more widely used and eventually seen as essential in every home".

The following Companies are sponsoring the STA's 30th Anniversary Celebration:

- Ariston
- Grant Engineering (UK) Ltd.
- Oxford Solar Ltd.
- PPL Training Ltd.
- Riomay Ltd.
- Secon Solar Ltd.
- Worcester - Bosch Group

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Notes for Editors

The **Solar Trade Association (STA)** is a UK leading independent renewable trade association and was formed in 1978. It represents the solar thermal industry ie for hot water heating -

It aims to

- influence opinion, and
- facilitate the widespread acceptance of solar energy technology and provide information to our members on a regular basis concerning national and international standards, public enquiries, new legislation and advances in technology.

In addition, the Association

- participates in standards committees and has a regular dialogue with Government Departments;
- serves as an enquiry centre for the public, industry and governmental bodies;
- provides information to enhance the general understanding of the advantages derived from solar thermal energy systems.

Members are bound by a strict Code of Ethical Practice - backed up by a strict disciplinary procedure.

For more information about the Solar Trade Association visit the website at www.solartradeassociation.org