

Agenda Item 14

Biographies of witnesses attending on 13th May 2009

Pooran Desai, OBE HonFRIBA, BioRegional



Pooran is Sustainability Director of BioRegional Quintain Ltd, which in joint venture with Crest Nicholson PLC is constructing the One Brighton development next to Brighton Station, widely being heralded as setting a new benchmark for cost-effective sustainable property development in the UK.

In 1994, Pooran co-founded the environmental organisation BioRegional Development Group. He has worked on projects in sustainable farming, forestry, recycling & eco-housing. Work on local woodland management led Pooran to establishing the BioRegional Charcoal Company, which supplies national retailers with local charcoal and firewood.

In 1998, he drew together the partnership to construct Beddington Zero (fossil) Energy Development (BedZED), currently UK's largest eco-village development. The project was developed with the Peabody Trust and won the 2002 International Energy Globe Award, 2003 Evening Standard Lifestyles Award and was shortlisted for the 2003 Stirling Prize.

Pooran chaired the Homes and Environment group of ACCPE (the UK Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Advisory Committee on Consumer Products and the Environment), has sat on the steering group of Buildings Research Establishment's EcoHomes group. He has been a consultant to central government, local authorities and developers. He is a director of the international 'One Planet Communities' initiative working on projects including a 6,000 home zero carbon development in Portugal, 6000 homes in South Africa and led BioRegional's team which wrote the sustainability plan for Masdar City, a new zero carbon zero waste city for 50,000 people under construction in Abu Dhabi.

Pooran has co-authored two books: 'BioRegional Solutions for Living on One Planet', a briefing for the Schumacher Society and 'One Planet Living[®]'. He has written a third book, 'One Planet Communities' which will be published in October 2009. In 2004, Pooran was awarded an OBE for services to sustainable development and in 2007 was made an Honorary Fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects. In 2009, with BioRegional's co-founder,

Sue Riddlestone, he was presented with a prestigious international Skoll Award for Social Enterprise.

David Porter, Environmental Enterprise Manager, EnviroBusiness

David's role in EnviroBusiness is to work with small companies, universities, corporates and public sector support programmes to create and nurture new business opportunities. This involves using market knowledge of all parts of the Environmental Technologies and Services sector to identify growth areas, create business partnerships and provide access to investment and customers.

David has extensive experience in helping innovative environmental technology companies and in delivering public support programmes. Previously, as Director of managed the SETsquared Business Acceleration Programme, he has raised grant and commercial investment for new technologies & services and has helped forge collaborative corporate and university partnerships for innovation. David has undertaken market research in a wide range of areas and has provided strategic advice to both startups and corporates.

Jim Christy, Director, East Sussex Enterprise Hub

Jim started his career with Manpower Services Commission shaping and developing new youth and adult training programmes. He subsequently moved into Economic Regeneration developing pioneering programmes with Sussex TEC which resulted in thousands of young people and adults achieving work based NVQ's across Sussex.

He commissioned early economic research across the West Sussex Coastal strip which triggered the formation of the most successful Business/public sector economic partnerships attracting millions of pounds investment into the Sussex economy.

With extensive experience of business planning, marketing and sales strategies Jim moved into the private sector as a director of a successful distribution company supplying the major utility companies across the UK.

Following the sale of the company and a period of direct consultancy, he became director of the Hastings Enterprise Hub in 2005 which successfully merged into the East Sussex Hub in 2007 raising nearly £5M of investment for SME businesses and generating £6.3M of GVA. The Hub currently has 67 Portfolio business clients and around 750 network clients. Sector groups have been developed for Environmental and Manufacturing companies in East Sussex.

As a hobby, Jim enjoys playing golf and is constantly looking for that new idea/innovation that will get him down to scratch!

Dr. Jim Watson, Director of Sussex Energy Group, Sussex University.

Dr Jim Watson is Director of the Sussex Energy Group at Sussex University in the UK and Joint Deputy Leader of the Tyndall Centre Climate Change and Energy Programme. Jim trained as an engineer at Imperial College London and has a PhD in science and technology policy from Sussex University. He manages and conducts research on energy and climate policy. His UK-based projects focus on energy innovation policy, distributed energy systems, carbon capture and storage, and the potential impacts of a new programme of nuclear power. He frequently works with UK government departments, and is a lead expert with the UK Foresight programme on its recent project: *Powering Our Lives*. He has been a Specialist Adviser with the House of Commons Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee since 2006. Internationally, he conducts research on low carbon technology transfer (including advice to the British, Chinese and Indian governments), and manages Tyndall Centre research on energy and climate scenarios for China. In summer 2008, he spent three months as a Visiting Scholar at the Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University. Jim is a Council Member of the British Institute for Energy Economics and a Trustee of the Koru Foundation.

