

## Gazette newsround

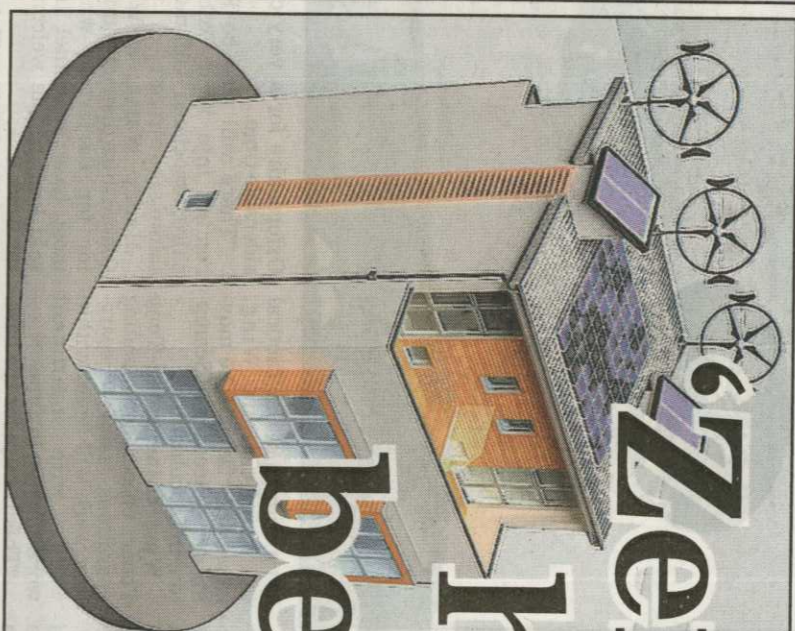
### Road will be closed

WORK to carry out repairs on Walterbush Road, Chipping Norton, on Tuesday, March 27, and Wednesday, March 28, will involve the road being closed from its junction with Burford Road.

The work is being carried out by Oxfordshire County Council. A suggested diversion will be in operation via Cornish Road and Churchill Road.

Access will be maintained for emergency service vehicles and people living within the closure area.

For more information, contact the county council on 0845 310 11 11.



# 'Zero carbon' homes will be produced in Witney

THE UK's first commercially viable 'zero carbon' house will be built in West Oxfordshire.

The Stewart Milne Group will produce the state-of-the-art property at its Witney site, as a showcase to be put on display at a leading exhibition.

Managers say the building, which will have a timber-frame construction, as well as a host of environmentally-friendly features, fits with the Government's aim that all new homes should be 'zero carbon' within a decade.

The news came as Stewart Milne predicted another record year, with more jobs set to be created.

The groundbreaking property scores five stars on the Government's new Code for Sustainable Homes—the highest rating currently possible for

houses that can be built in large quantities.

While six stars means a property is 'totally zero carbon', it is still 100 per cent greener than current building regulations dictate.

Stewart Dalgarno, managing director of the Witney factory, said: "This will be the first commercially attractive 'zero carbon' house for volume builders.

"We expect up to 25 per cent of our output will be houses of this type in the near future."

The property will be constructed in Witney, with windows installed, ready to be lifted into place on site.

Features will include three wind turbines, solar panels, and a water recycling system.

BY ANDREW SMITH

Glenn Allison, managing director of the Stewart Milne Group, added: "The single biggest impact on our business will be climate change, and we felt we should take an industry lead by building a commercially-viable house, that reflected the Government's objective to achieve zero carbon houses within a decade."

The house will be launched at BRE's modern methods of construction showcase event, Offsite 2007, at Watford, in June.

Meanwhile, Stewart Milne, which opened its plant in Witney five years ago, has predicted turnover at the site for this year will increase by 23 per cent, to £34m. The company expects to take staff numbers to 200 by the end of 2007, up from the current 163.

The Witney operation produces a home every 45 minutes from its assembly line, which will lead to a total of 3,400 by the end of the business year in 2007. Recent orders have included 38 houses for the Cotsway Housing Association in north-east Carterton, 29 houses and apartments for the Sovereign Housing Association, at Madley Park, Witney, and 21 apartments in Kidlington.



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