

● Low Impact Development

Low Impact Development (LID) is a radical approach to creating sustainable homes and livelihoods which fosters social, economic and environmental renewal.

Geographers have been working directly with over a dozen local communities and policy makers to help develop LID projects and policies.



Photo by Larch Maxey

At the heart of the movement are two academic geographers Dr Larch Maxey FRGS, of the geography department of Swansea University and Dr Jenny Pickerill FRGS, of Leicester University.

Both have brought their practical expertise to the table, pulling together knowledge from across dozens of examples of projects, including their own experiences with communities such as the Lammas project in Pembrokeshire, and the Ecological Land Coop, to illustrate how LID works in practice and show others how they too can get involved with similar projects.

Rather than wait for planners and policy makers to take a lead on delivering sustainability, many individuals and groups have begun to deliver developments themselves 'from the ground up'.

This emerging approach, known as Low Impact Development (LID), has its background as a grass roots movement, and as such its actual definition has continued to evolve, but in each case has been rooted

in "practical projects which have drawn upon elements including permaculture, traditional knowledge, and appropriate 'low-carbon' technology. LID places the challenges of climate change and peak oil at its heart."

The movement also seeks to "provide inspiration beyond the boundaries of their own developments and provide practical examples which others can follow." For example, since 2005 the UK has witnessed a growing interest in local, seasonal, organic and home grown food, as illustrated by rising sales of seeds and growing waiting lists for allotments. These have been heightened further by the ongoing economic recession.

Low Impact Development: The Future In Our Hands, has been published by [Dr Larch Maxey](#) (Swansea University) and [Dr Jenny Pickerill](#) (University of Leicester)