



Hempcrete is an excellent insulator and is a much lighter weight building material than concrete. | Photo source [Barrault Pressacco](#)

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SOCIAL HOUSING IN PARIS USES HEMPCRETE TO LOWER CARBON FOOTPRINT

 ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN

Hemp biowaste is combined with water and lime for a strong, lightweight concrete replacement

Spotted: French architecture firm Barrault Pressacco created a new building in Paris' 18th Arrondissement for 15 social housing apartments and two ground floor shops. The structure includes two central courtyards that enhance natural lighting as well as provide semi-private outdoor space for residents. Each apartment has bay windows overlooking the street and additional windows that look into the courtyards.

The wood-framed building uses hempcrete instead of concrete for the walls, and, as a result, already conforms to newly enacted government regulations regarding the sustainability of all new public construction projects. The hempcrete is applied as a spray in layers within the frame before being finished with an interior of lime rendering.

Hempcrete is an excellent insulator and is a much lighter weight building material than concrete. It also absorbs moisture, making it particularly useful in humid climates and as a means of reducing the likelihood of interior mould.

Springwise has spotted other uses for this versatile plant including as a replacement for wood flooring and as a natural microbial [fabric for underwear](#).

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Takeaway:

Designers and architects are increasingly publicising the benefits of using hempcrete. Although the material cannot bear as much weight as can concrete, its eco-credentials far outweigh this drawback. The lightness of the material makes it much easier to transport and move, and for regions that experience regular strong weather conditions, it is much safer than concrete. Concrete is brittle whereas hempcrete has the ability to flex without breaking. Add in the ease with which hemp grows, and the ability to use hemp plant waste in construction and the possibilities for its use appear numerous. Hemp is also one of the few substances able to continue absorbing carbon after being used in construction.