

GBN members win best practice awards at Environment Event

Nine GBN member businesses achieved Best Practice Awards at the Business Environment Event held at Shuttleworth College. The companies had all taken part in the Business Environmental Awareness Training (BETI) project, of which GBN is a partner, and were given awards for the initiatives they implemented following the training.

Each of the winners demonstrated significant business and environmental benefits. For example, Addison Buildings, a small,

family-run conservatory and external building company reduced waste by 50% and saved around £10,000 in the first year. Fieldhouse & Husbands has initiated an innovative bumper repair scheme that enables a third of bumpers that would have gone to landfill to be repaired.

The Awards were presented by Councillor Richard Baker MBE, chair of Bedfordshire County Council as the finale of an extremely well attended conference dealing with environmental issues affecting local businesses. (Story contd on page 2.)



Right: Councillor Richard Baker MBE presents Sean McClurg of Fieldhouse and Husbands with the best practice award

GBN welcomes new Chairperson



Charles Neame has taken over the Chair of GBN after Dick Frampton retired at the December AGM.

Dick was warmly thanked by the GBN Board for steering the network throughout his

busy 18-month term of office.

Charles Neame works for the Institute of Water and Environment at Cranfield University. Originally a farmer, Charles demonstrated his interest in the environment early on. In the 1980s, he was involved in the commercialisation of low-input, high-output management systems in fruit production at a time when the farming industry was getting sucked into the increasingly intensive use of agro-chemicals and energy.

Charles joined Cranfield in 1982 as an agricultural economist and now runs its MSc course in Environmental Management for Business.

This gives him a particular interest in organisations such as GBN, but he has an added incentive for becoming involved because Cranfield is currently working towards ISO 14001 registration.

He says, "I hope the next couple of years will see an increase in GBN membership, and I would like to see the organisation's members getting increasingly involved in the network."

Charles would be delighted to hear from anyone who is able to host a meeting, or share their company's experience with other members. You can call him on 01525 863137, or e: c.neame@cranfield.ac.uk.

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Around 150 delegates at the Business Environment Event were welcomed by Councillor John Hawksby, portfolio holder economic regeneration at Bedfordshire County Council. Opening the Event, Councillor Hawksby said, "It makes sound management sense for all businesses to maximise their profit whilst reducing waste. Everyone in business has a responsibility to make a positive contribution to the environment wherever possible, or at the very least to minimise their negative impacts."

The event, set to link in with World Environment Day, was organised under the umbrella of the Bedfordshire & Luton Sustainable Business Partnership (BLSBP) by BETI, Bedfordshire County Council and the Environment Agency.

Speakers from a variety of agencies then gave presentations on how businesses could reap benefits from introducing environmentally sound business management practices. These included Paul Hinds, environment manager at the East of England Development Agency and Barbara Morton, project manager of sustainable procurement at JEMU and DTI, who spoke about "greening" supply chains.



Giving the regulators' viewpoint was Paul Woodcock (*pictured above*), regional director of the Environment Agency. He explained why the environment would be of growing concern to businesses – from both a regulatory and environmental point of view.

The late morning sessions were given over to the practical help available to businesses. Antony Gough, regional agent of Envirowise, offered advice to businesses about waste minimisation and Gary Cowell, chief executive of Milton Keynes Energy Agency, gave delegates examples of how savings could be made through

improved energy efficiency.

Three new business initiatives, designed to help businesses deal with the most pressing environmental issues they face, were also launched at the conference.

The nationally acclaimed, Business Environmental Training Initiative (BETI) is to run again thanks to funding from the Learning + Skills Council, The European Social Fund (ESF), and Bedfordshire County Council. It will offer free environmental awareness training to 80 SMEs in Bedfordshire and Luton.

The Business Travel Initiative (BTI) is a national pilot project aimed at helping SMEs to address the impacts of travel

associated with their business. The scheme is funded by ESF and Bedfordshire County Council and will be run in association with Transport Energy.

Finally, Business Energy Efficiency Training (BEET), also funded by ESF and Bedfordshire County Council, and led by Milton Keynes Energy Agency will offer energy reviews and advice on how to save money while also increasing staff support for changes and individual skills.

The next round of BETI training begins in September 2004. For information or to book a place, email Garth McKenzie at garth.mckenzie@bedscc.gov.uk or visit www.beti.info

BETI Best Practice Award Winners 2004:

- Initiative and Imagination - Nigel Smith, Addison Buildings.
- Waste Reduction and Repair Scheme - Sean McClurg, Fieldhouse and Husbands.
- New Business Opportunities through Environmental Management - John Jennings, EPL Access.
- Building Staff Enthusiasm and Morale Through Environmental Training - Graeme Barker, Manor Concepts
- Showing How Small Firms can really make a Difference Kate Leo, Avec Systems
- Energy Efficiency and Cost Savings Award - Geoff Caine, Stevenage Leisure Ltd
- Holistic Approach to Sustainable Business - Sue Worboys, Manor Farm Leisure
- Custodians of the Countryside Award - Paul Cripsey, F B Parrish and Son.
- Proactive Approach to Continuous Improvement Award Ratna Morjaria, Degussa Goldschmidt.



Waste workshop warns members: Costs of waste disposal will rise sharply

The recent Waste Management and Minimisation workshop held in June at Shanks's Elstow Waste Transfer Site issued a warning to businesses that changes to the management of hazardous waste are about to take effect. Under new Hazardous Waste Regulations, companies have a legal obligation to handle this waste safely and responsibly, and to only give it to properly licensed waste carriers or waste facilities.

In the past, around 200 landfills have been used to dispose of hazardous and non-hazardous waste together. This practice of co-disposal will be banned from 16 July, when all hazardous waste will need to be treated prior to landfilling in just 10 sites. The new rules will affect both the operators of landfill sites and producers of hazardous wastes, and are expected to have a significant impact on the ability of businesses to dispose of their waste.

Leading the workshop, Amanda Harrison, environmental development officer at Mid Beds District Council, explained that the

new Regulations include the revised European Waste Catalogue (EWC), which adds around 250 items to the hazardous waste list. For the first time, items such as fluorescent tubes, scrap cars, televisions and computer monitors will need to be treated to remove hazardous materials. This means that companies that hadn't previously fallen into the category of hazardous waste producers may now be subject to the new legislation.

To help combat the inevitable rising costs of waste disposal, and the business threat that this poses, Amanda led discussions that focused on commonsense approaches to how to store, label, transfer, and dispose of waste safely and securely; good housekeeping on-site, and the basic legislation governing waste disposal.

She also explained to GBN members that there are benefits to be had by dealing with the Regulations with imagination and creativity. Ms Harrison said, "Dealing with hazardous waste is expensive and will become even more costly over the next few years. Business need to look at ways of eliminating and

reducing waste at input. For example, can toxic substances be replaced by less damaging ones? Can waste items, such as packaging, be reused? Can the production process itself become more efficient? By following these simple steps, the company is likely to save money."

Simon Bailes, Shanks's Elstow site manager, brought the formal presentations to a conclusion by offering companies the waste contractor's perspective on how waste disposal works, the costs involved, and how they potentially could make money out of some waste products.

Break-out groups worked on waste minimisation policies and waste disposal procedures, using case studies from two local companies, with good points being used as a template for writing works instructions.

Finally, delegates were treated to a tour of the Elstow Materials Recycling facility, where the escalating waste disposal problems facing society were graphically illustrated.

GBN admin support from Forest Centre



Charles Neame (right) looks on as Simon James hands over GBN's administrative reins to Ruth Sandifer

Following Simon James's decision to step down from GBN administrative and executive support roles to concentrate on his consultancy business, the Forest Centre in Marston Moretaine is to take over as administrative support for GBN.

The Forest Centre is home of the Forest of Marston Vale Trust (FoMV) and is also a charity with environmental objectives. Its excellent facilities and experienced administrative staff will make the Centre an impressive partner.

For GBN members, it's business as usual. The programme of events, the newsletter and the website will continue as before, managed by a steering group made up of members and representatives of supporting organisations. The only change will be to contact details. For administrative enquiries or to book a place at an event, contact Ruth Sandifer at the Forest Centre (details on the back cover). Any other queries or comments should be directed to the Chairman Charles Neame tel: 01525 863137 or c.neame@cranfield.ac.uk.

GBN would like to thank Simon James for all his hard work in the role of executive officer and wish him all the best for the future.

The Environment Agency has urged businesses to follow a five-point plan to prepare for the changes:

1. Check whether your waste is hazardous using Environment Agency guidelines
2. Know where your hazardous waste is going
Check your waste carrier's proper authorisation with the Environment Agency on 0800 807 060. Failure to do so could result in you being prosecuted, especially if your waste is fly-tipped.
3. Explore ways of reducing the amount of hazardous waste you produce
Substituting other materials for hazardous materials could reduce costs and improve efficiency. Call Envirowise on 0800 585794 or visit the website (www.envirowise.gov.uk) for a free and confidential "Fastrack" waste minimisation audit.
4. Budget for rising costs for the treatment and disposal of hazardous waste
5. Keep up to date
Hazardous waste classification covers a broader range of equipment and materials than ever before, which may mean you may become a hazardous waste producer for the first time.

Visit www.netregs.gov.uk for advice and information on waste



In Brief - Environment Update

Fresh approach to GBN workshops proves successful

A revamp of the way in which GBN's programme of workshops are run has proved to be extremely popular.

Amanda Harrison, who is a qualified trainer with experience in environmental management, has developed the GBN training programme of early morning workshops and other events with a view to making them more interactive and giving delegates more hands-on involvement.

While a chalk and talk element still exists, participants get the opportunity to evaluate case

studies, other companies' working practices and to draw up proposals and procedures at the seminars.

Amanda says, "I feel it is important that participants go back to work with the thought process already started and something tangible in their hand. I don't want them going back to work, scratching their heads as to how to implement the theory."

With the last two workshops, dealing with Environmental Policy, and Waste respectively, both being oversubscribed, it seems that GBN members have welcomed this new approach.

GBN Programme of Events

5 August - Water

At: The Environment Agency, Bromholme Lane, Brampton, Huntingdon, Cambs PE18 8NE

Guest speakers from the Environment Agency and Alpheus Environmental will cover water resources availability and pollution issues, and minimising costs of water treatment and disposal. There will be an optional tour of the fish disease and/or ageing unit.

15 September - Energy issues for business

At: The National Energy Centre, Knowlhill, Milton Keynes

Improve efficiency and reduce costs, includes site visit around the National Energy Centre

20 October - Purchasing Strategy

venue tba

Save money long-term by improving purchasing choices


Unless otherwise stated, all events start at 8.00am and finish between 10.30 and 11.00am. Each workshop focuses on an issue and provides guidance on setting objectives, targets and monitoring processes. All workshops feature a tutorial, interactive case study, a guest specialist speaker and a group exercise. For more information, or to book a place, please contact Ruth Sandifer: ruth.sandifer@marstonvale.org.

WORKSHOPS ARE VERY POPULAR AND SPACES ARE LIMITED, SO BOOK EARLY TO AVOID DISAPPOINTMENT.


Disclaimer

"These updates are for guidance only. GBN is not in a position to give definitive advice on matters concerning the law and you should always consult your legal advisors on these matters. GBN does not accept liability for any errors, omissions or misleading information."

Prosecutions

 P & P Wilkinson (Skip Hire) in Huddersfield


was fined £3,500 by Magistrates and was ordered to pay costs of £1,600, after admitting to illegally depositing, storing and treating controlled waste. The company's director, Tony Wilkinson, was fined £300.

 Brian Thomsett of Joyce Green Farm in Dartford, Kent was


fined £750 and awarded costs of £1,650 after he pleaded guilty to running an illegal landfill site on the Dartford Marshes. The site is deemed a nature conservation site and is home to the rare water vole.

 Leeds-based landscape gardener Anthony Mitchell

received a conditional discharge for six months, was ordered to pay £400 in costs and £100 compensation to Leeds City Council for dumping green waste in a council car park..

 Hall and Woodhouse of The Brewery, Blandford St Mary

were fined £4,000 each and £1060 in costs for each of three counts of causing pollutants to enter the River Stour. An Environment Agency officer reported that a fungal growth on the riverbed extended 100metres downstream of the brewery, which suggested the pollution had been going on for weeks.

 Anderson (Barry) Ltd and its director Malcolm Anderson

were fined £1,010 in fines and costs following an attempt to deposit waste materials at Gilbert Gardens in Barry, South Wales.

 H Wicks (Lindal) of Barrow-in-Furness

was fined £3,500 for burning controlled waste. The company recycles wooden pallets and bales waste paper for recycling. The company also paid £903.06 in costs to the Environment Agency.

Useful Websites

www.gbn-bedfordshire.org.uk

www.beti.info

www.bedfordshire-waste-exchange.co.uk

www.environment-agency.gov.uk

www.edie.net

www.envirowise.gov.uk

www.detr.gov.uk

www.energy-efficiency.gov.uk

www.envirolinkuk.org

www.netregs.gov.uk

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