



# Business Environmental NEWS

SUMMER 2003

*Benefiting your business!*

ISSUE 9

Welcome to the summer edition of Business Environmental News, the newsletter of the York and North Yorkshire Business Environmental Forum. The Forum is 'back to business' with a new co-ordinator to provide you with information on best practice; funding opportunities; new legislation and initiatives; and to encourage sustainable environmental action.

If you are not already a member of the Forum then why don't you join the 350 businesses that have already taken advantage of this free service and are leading the way by reducing their environmental impact. You will be entitled to a range of benefits, including the quarterly newsletter; updates on activities and training events; and the chance to participate in network events.

To register as a member please contact the Business Environmental Forum on 01904 656769 or email Katie.

If you would like to see a particular feature or information in the next newsletter please let us know.

To register as a member all you need to do is complete the on-line booking form at:

[www.here4greenbusiness.co.uk](http://www.here4greenbusiness.co.uk)

Or telephone Katie on 01904 656769

Or e-mail [katie.harvey@blyny.co.uk](mailto:katie.harvey@blyny.co.uk)

Or write to Katie Harvey, Business Environmental Forum, c/o Business Link York & North Yorkshire, Arabesque House, Monks Cross Drive, Huntington, York, YO32 9WU

The Forum would like to introduce the beginning of an exciting new chapter with the appointment of Katie Harvey as the new environmental co-ordinator. Katie previously worked for Wastewatch, delivering the Schools Waste Action Club (SWAC) project countywide. The project provided teachers and pupils with education on waste minimisation and helped implement a recycling infrastructure in partnership with local authorities and other organisations.



Katie has been in post for a couple of months now, and has been helping businesses with environmental issues, adding new impetus to existing projects and developing new initiatives. Please contact Katie if you want to suggest how the Forum can further develop its services to business. If your business is considering how to reduce its impact on the environment contact Katie for assistance.

## Environmentally unwise

Less than a quarter of businesses have taken steps to reduce their impact on the environment, or have an environmental policy in place, according to the 'SME-nvironment 2003' survey of over 8,000 businesses carried out by the Environment Agency. The survey also revealed that just 18% of businesses could name any environmental regulations affecting their activities and 41% want more information and advice in dealing with environmental matters.

To look at the survey, visit [www.environment-agency.gov.uk/netregs](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/netregs)

# Wind of Change



A North Yorkshire School has recently celebrated the installation of its own wind turbine. Nidderdale High School and Community College at Pateley Bridge is demonstrating how green electricity can be produced right on your doorstep and is taking the lead in wind power.

The UK has a large potential wind resource, but only 0.5% of our electricity's requirements come from wind turbines. The Nidderdale turbine will be used to demonstrate how wind power can be used to produce electricity for businesses, factories, farms and similar buildings. It is a sustainable source of energy and can, over time, result in a substantial financial saving.

The project has been managed by North Yorkshire County Council and has been part-funded by a £50,000 Lottery grant from the New Opportunities Fund and grants from Npower and the Clear Skies Fund. Contact Katie to find out more about the Nidderdale turbine or to arrange to visit the school to see it in action.

# Business and the community



A Corporate Responsibility Bill has been put before Parliament in an attempt to tighten up rules on the ethical behaviour of companies. On a voluntary basis many companies are already committed to corporate social responsibility but the new legislation will impose this duty on them. Many MP's back the need for more comprehensive social responsibility laws, and this is strongly echoed around the world. Linda Perham, MP for Ilford North, who tabled the Bill, said 'People are concerned by the growing social and environmental impacts corporate activities have on their lives. The Government must recognize this'.

A recent poll for Defra showed 71% of the British public agrees that the Government should ask all businesses to report on their environmental impact. Growing support from members of the business community towards mandatory regulation highlights the need for such responsibility and would also ensure a fairer business environment by putting pressure on those who do not address the issue. Further importance is reflected in the FTSE4Good index which provides companies with a transparent, challenging yet achievable global corporate responsibility standard to aspire to and exceed.

## Go Carbon Neutral

In the battle against climate change, one of the key actions an individual or organisation can take is to reduce their carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions. CO<sub>2</sub> is one of the main gases produced by burning fossil based fuels, such as coal and oil, to generate electricity and power vehicles. That's why the Local Authority Support Programme based in York has become a certified Carbon Neutral™ company. Organisations can seek this recognition by filling out a Carbon Footprint Questionnaire which includes energy use, business travel, commuting and waste management. This is used to assess an organisation's greenhouse gas emissions. This carbon assessment is then converted into a Carbon Footprint Report, which includes a breakdown of emissions and their sources and suggestions for implementing a carbon plan. On average a small business of around 30 employees may produce 200 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> pa, however this is a rough guide and each business would need individual assessment.

Going Carbon Neutral means that the company can then fund the planting of trees each year which will absorb its annual CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. 200 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> pa would be compensated for by a tree planting programme with a cost of £2000 per annum. In this way there is a balancing of CO<sub>2</sub>, as it is converted from the atmosphere into live wood. The scheme is run by Future Forests which offers access to tree planting projects around the world, ranging from coniferous reforestation to community fruit growing co-operatives. This process, known as carbon sequestration, is best combined with efforts to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions through efficient use of energy and transport. It's also possible to make business events and personal holidays Carbon Neutral; Future Forests can be contacted via their web site at [www.futureforests.com](http://www.futureforests.com)

Business Environmental Forum is currently a partner in developing a local project to create new native woodland to absorb companies' and individuals' carbon dioxide emissions. If you would be interested in joining a project based and managed within North Yorkshire, contact Katie Harvey at BEF on 01904 656769 or Lance Saxby on 01904 554415



# Development of Green Business Clubs

The Green Business Support Organisation (GBSO) is a group of Yorkshire and Humber environmental service providers, funding bodies and other regional environmental decision makers who aim to improve the environmental performance of small and medium sized enterprises in the region. Businesses in York and North Yorkshire will have the opportunity to join local Green Business Clubs to facilitate discussion on relevant issues and make significant environmental improvements and financial savings. The project is a partnership between Business in the Community and Business Link York and North Yorkshire, with support from Yorkshire Forward.

If you would like to find out more about forming or joining a local green business club, please contact Katie.

## Regional Index of Environmental Engagement 2003

The results of the fifth Regional Index of Environmental Engagement have recently been announced with a record number of entries this year. The Index is the leading benchmark of environmental management in the region. Businesses can compare their environmental performance achievements with others in the region. Firms that scored 95 per cent or more across a wide range of environmental performance measures entered the 'Premier League'. This year this included Kelda, BP, BT, Kirklees Council, Waste Recycling Group, Lafarge Cement, YEDL (Yorkshire Electricity Distribution) and Kalon Decorative Products. Many of Yorkshire's leading organisations are showing their commitment to the environment through greater emphasis on environmental issues and developing greener supply chains. Businesses who act in a sustainable and responsible way have seen how this makes great business sense. For further information visit [www.bitc.org.uk](http://www.bitc.org.uk) click on regions, programmes, BitE then Index.

## BS 8555 - New environmental standard for SME's

There are over 3.7 million SMEs in the UK, and firms employing fewer than 10 people make up over 90% of all companies in the country. SMEs also account for 60% of the country's business waste, and over half of all environmental incidents. The British Standards Institute's new BS 8555 is part of Project Acorn, an initiative aimed at promoting best environmental practice among small and medium sized businesses.

This is the first time that SMEs have been looked at specifically regarding their impact on the environment. The new standard is implemented in stages, simplifying the process of installing a formal environmental management system into five levels. A sixth level is also available which allows companies the possibility of becoming accredited to ISO 14001 standard. The stages of the standard mean it is flexible and allows for the

budget and resource constraints of smaller businesses.

The British Standard BS 8555 (Full title: Guide to the phased implementation of an environmental management system including the use of environmental performance evaluation) was published in April 2003. For further information contact The Acorn Trust on 01522 540069 or check out [www.theacorntrust.org](http://www.theacorntrust.org)

## Safe disposal of business waste

North Yorkshire County Council accepts business waste at its Waste and Recycling Centre at Stonefall, Harrogate. The Council wants to make it easier for businesses to dispose of waste locally and is considering extending this facility to more of its waste sites. From 4 August this facility will be tested at the Yafforth Road site, Northallerton and if this proves a success the Council will consider arranging

for other sites to take business waste. The sites will accept business waste at certain times and on certain days, so as to fit in with their use by the public. A modest charge applies (eg. approx. £40 for a full Transit load) for the disposal of business waste at these sites but the Council hopes that businesses will see that this is an environmentally responsible method of disposing of their

waste and can also be very cost effective. It is also hoped that by making this facility available locally there will be a reduction in the number of irresponsible businesses who fly tip their waste or try to dispose of it by other inappropriate and often illegal methods.

For further information contact NYCC Waste Management on 01609 532512.

# LEGISLATION UPDATE

## WEEE Directive

The Directive aims to reduce the waste arising from electrical and electronic equipment; and improve the environmental performance of all those involved in the life cycle of electrical and electronic equipment. The Directive is due to be brought into force in the UK by 13 August 2004.

### Which businesses will be directly affected?

It will affect those involved in manufacturing, selling, distributing, recycling or treating electrical and electronic equipment (including household appliances, IT and telecommunications equipment, audiovisual equipment, lighting equipment, electrical and electronic tools, toys, leisure and sports equipment, medical devices and automatic dispensers)

### Update

However, the WEEE Directive is to be revised to protect electronic companies with declining sales. The European Commission wants to revise the Directive concerning old WEEE from non-household

sources. Presently the producer is responsible for all items it has manufactured before August 2005, irrespective of current sales figures. The Commission would like to see this changed so that companies selling electronic equipment to a commercial or industrial enterprise would be liable for the costs of recycling the items being replaced on a like-for-like basis. This would take into account the current financial status of the company and would limit the liability of producers.

If your business has some electronic equipment that is no longer needed then why not ensure it is redistributed to the not-for-profit sector. Contact Katie Harvey for further details. Contact your local council for advice on how to dispose of unwanted equipment in an environmentally responsible and lawful way.

### Climate Change Levy how is this affecting my business?

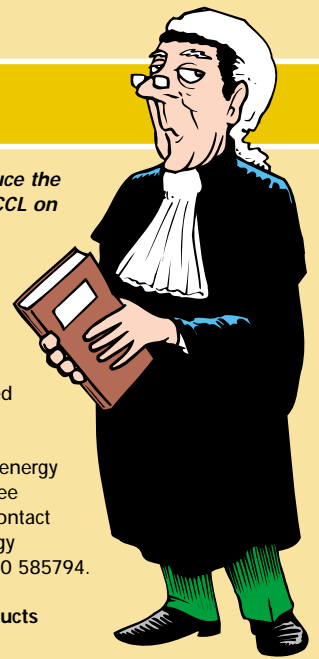
You could be paying up to 10% more on your energy bills through the levy.

### How can I reduce the impact of the CCL on my business?

You can switch to energy from new renewable sources; or install good quality combined heat and power systems; or by improving your energy efficiency. For free energy advice contact the Action Energy helpline on 0800 585794.

### Animal Bi-products Regulation

This regulation came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2003 and requires catering waste to be treated in a closed vessel and heated to a min. of 70°C for one hour, depending on particle size.



# Funding update

## Action Energy

Although many energy saving measures involve little or no expenditure, some organisations find that they need to invest in new equipment in order to reduce their energy consumption. To help small businesses make these investments, **Action Energy** offers interest-free energy loans of between £5,000 and £50,000 to fund the cost of buying energy equipment. To find out more contact Action Energy on 0800 585794 alternatively look at [www.actionenergy.org.uk](http://www.actionenergy.org.uk)

The **Enhanced Capital Allowance Scheme** enables businesses to claim 100% first year capital allowances on investments in energy saving technologies and products. Businesses are now able to write off the whole cost of their investment against their taxable profits of the period during which they make the investment. Enhanced Capital Allowances will encourage businesses to invest in low carbon technologies. For further information contact The Carbon Trust 020 7170 7020 or see [www.eca.gov.uk](http://www.eca.gov.uk)



# EVENTS

## Waste minimisation and Energy Efficiency Event

Location: Scarborough

Date: 13<sup>th</sup> Sept 2003 Time: 9.00am – 12.30pm

This free event is organised by the Business Environmental Forum, Action Energy and Scarborough Borough Council. There will be presentations by experts in energy management and waste minimisation. Attendees will learn where to find free help, funding and how to get free consultancy from specialists in waste and energy management. If you would like to attend, please contact Daniel O'Connor at Scarborough BC on 01723 232509.

## Yorkshire & Humberside Envirenergy 2003

Date: 25<sup>th</sup> September 2003 Time: 9.00 – 4.00pm Venue: The Royal Armouries, Leeds

This is a free event with exhibitions and presentations on how to improve energy/environmental performance, reduce costs and maximize profits. Attend any of the presentations on renewables, carbon management and energy saving. For more information on exhibitor details or on-line bookings visit [www.envirenergy.org.uk](http://www.envirenergy.org.uk)

# Useful Links Useful Links Useful Links

The **Environment Agency** has recently launched a website called 'Netregs' which provides simplified guidance on environmental obligations. It has been developed to help small and medium enterprises to understand the practical implications of very detailed and rapidly changing environmental law and policy. The great thing about Netregs is that it is free and anonymous and you don't have to speak to the regulator. Ensure you take a look at [www.environment-agency.gov.uk/netregs](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/netregs) today!

**Free energy audits** are available to SME's with under 250 employees and with a combined fuel bill of between £5,000 and £50,000 per annum. Don't waste any money or time! There are no catches, simply contact the local Action Energy Officer, Owen Daggett on 01904 656769 to arrange a visit. If your annual fuel bill exceeds £50,000 then arrange for an Action Energy consultant to visit you by calling 0800 585794.

**Envirowise have published 'The Easy Money guide'** which was produced in partnership with the British Retail Consortium. It provides straightforward advice and practical information for small retailers looking to maximise their profits by introducing more environmentally friendly measures. The guide is available to download from the Envirowise website ([www.envirowise.gov.uk](http://www.envirowise.gov.uk)) or you can order your copy from the Environment and Energy Helpline on 0800 585794.

Whilst the Y&NYBEF publishes BE News in good faith and takes care to check the accuracy of the information contained in each issue the Forum cannot accept responsibility for information derived from other sources or for action taken by businesses in response to that information.



The York & North Yorkshire Business Environmental Forum is generously supported by:  
•Yorwaste Limited •Government Office for Yorkshire & The Humber •Norwich Union Life •Business in the Environment •Business Link York & North Yorkshire •Yorkshire Forward •City of York Council •North Yorkshire County Council

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*please keep in touch*

If you have any comments to make about this Newsletter or need environmental advice please contact Katie at:

e-mail: [katie.harvey@blyny.co.uk](mailto:katie.harvey@blyny.co.uk)

or on-line at:  
[here4greenbusiness.co.uk](http://here4greenbusiness.co.uk)

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