

Bedfordshire

Green Business Network NEWS

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Casella scoops BETI+ best regional performance award

Casella (CEL) fought off stiff competition to win the best overall regional company performance award at the Business Environmental Training Initiative Plus (BETI+) Celebration Award ceremony, held at Homerton College, Cambridge at the end of March.

The Awards were held to mark the end of the EEDA and ESF funded BETI+ business support scheme, which had been running for 18 months and aimed to provide support to local businesses to achieve ISO 14001 or the first three phases of BS 8555. This was the first time that a collaborative training project had used a partnership covering most of the Eastern Region, offering the same support to businesses in Bedfordshire and Luton, Cambridgeshire, and Hertfordshire and Essex.

The programme provided CIWM Waste Awareness Certificate training for 119 individuals, and took 45 companies through a programme which would give them the knowledge and support to

implement a formal ISO 14001 environmental management system (EMS).

Casella was the first company throughout the region to achieve registration for its EMS and it did this in less than one year. It has also addressed other environmental impacts, with extraordinary results, including reducing water use by a massive 75%, re-designing packaging to make it recycle more easily has not just reduced the size of the box by 60%, but also reduced production costs by over 80% - and that's without taking into account the reduction in shipping costs.

The business has also seen other, less tangible benefits from implementing the environmental management system. Mark Thomson, environmental officer at Casella says: "Once our staff understood what we were trying to achieve, they came up with loads of suggestions, not just for cutting waste, but also for improving workflow and doing things better."

For a full run-down on the event and other winners, see pages 4-5.



Mark Thomson (left) receives the best regional performance award from keynote speaker Chris Sheldon

Looking for help? Why not take advantage of undergraduate talent this summer?

Are you looking for: an updated IT system or company database; a fresh marketing plan; a new company website; or a new product launching

If your business has a project that you've been meaning to do but don't have the time or resource to make it happen Shell Step could help.

Shell Step places talented undergraduates in small and medium sized enterprises over the summer to undertake specific eight week projects driven by the needs of the host company - giving you fast and affordable access to knowledge which will impact positively on business performance.

If you are interested in participating this summer, we advise you to get involved quickly - the demand for students is high so the sooner you register the better! All applications must be with us by 16 June.

For information, please contact Peter Cabon at Wenta on 0845 371 0891 or email shellstep@wenta.co.uk.



Environment Agency introduces Changes to PPC and Site Waste Management Licences

The Environment Agency has replaced the two separate Pollution Prevention and Control (PPC) and Site Waste Management Licences with a combined single Environmental Permit.

The new permits aim to simplify the permitting system. There will now be three types of environmental permit that the Environment Agency or your local council can issue:

- Standard permits
- Bespoke permits
- Consolidated permits.

Standard permits (SPs)

These are suitable for some waste activities and contain a standard set of conditions with which you have to comply. This permit is simpler and cheaper to apply for because it doesn't involve any individual consultation. In addition, it will be issued faster.

There are currently 28 SPs for waster operations. Typical facilities and activities covered by these include: waste transfer stations, recycling, composting, treatment of waste electrical and electronic equipment.

Bespoke Permits

If your operations could have a serious environmental impact or if your operations are novel or complex, you should apply for a bespoke permit. The Environment Agency or your local authority will then set conditions specific to your facility.

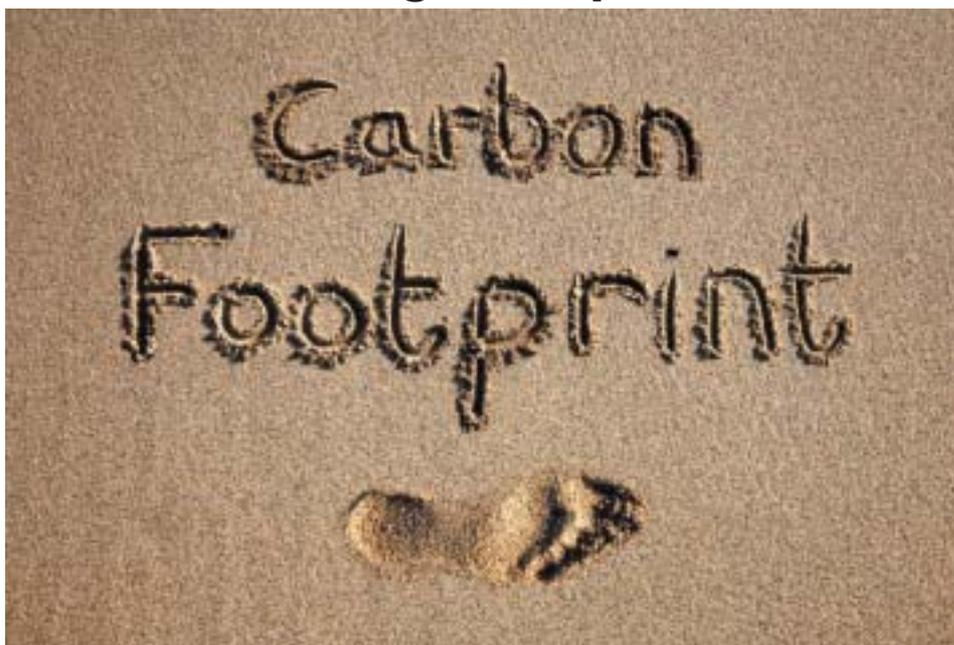
Consolidated Permits

If your business needs several permits, you can apply for a consolidated permit that takes into account all your operations.

If you're not sure whether you need environmental permits for your activities, or which permit you need to apply for, visit the Environment Agency's NetRegs website. This has been set up to explain the new regulations and many others in an easily understandable format.

The site also has a free environmental legislation updating service, which is extremely useful for keeping up to date. Visit www.netregs.gov.uk

Carbon Footprinting could become legal requirement



The House of Lords has just passed an amendment to the Climate Change Bill, which, if voted for by the Commons, would legally oblige companies to publicly disclose their greenhouse gas emissions in their annual reports.

Campaigners for the introduction of such measures believe it will create a level playing field for UK businesses, make them more accountable to consumers and investors, and drive emission reductions.

Lord Whitty, who tabled the original amendment, told the House: "[The targets] are going to be delivered by the main economic movers - namely private

companies acting to meet those targets within the framework that the legislation and the Government set.

"For those companies to change the way in which they behave in relation to carbon and carbon equivalents, they need to ensure that they have proper, verifiable measures of what carbon and the carbon equivalent is and that they are built into their central motivation for their management, their staff and their researchers."

Whether the amendment becomes a legal requirement is now in the hands of the Commons, and we will be keeping a close eye on further developments. 

New online carbon footprint tools now available

The Carbon Trust, Envirowise, and the Environment Agency have recently published online support packages and "indicators" to enable companies to start to calculate, measure, monitor and reduce their carbon footprints.

The first two organisations' carbon calculators are relevant to all businesses in all sectors, while the Environment

Agency's calculator and advice is specifically aimed at the construction industry.

If you're interested in looking at any of these tools, visit the following websites:

www.envirowise.gov.uk

www.carbontrust.co.uk

www.environment-agency.gov.uk 

GBN to offer help to to reduce carbon emissions

Help for businesses to calculate, monitor and reduce their emissions is available from a variety of agencies, including GBN. The Network is looking to continue its resource efficiency work with businesses from the end of May when current Envirowise funding

ceases, and will also be extending the focus to include carbon footprinting as a part of this.

The Network is hoping to make an announcement over the next couple of months relating to the shape the new Resource Efficiency Action Programme will take, so watch this space. 

BETI+ Celebration Awards

The Business Environmental Management Initiative Plus (BETI+) eighteen month pilot project to provide training and support for businesses to address their environmental impacts through management systems came to a close with a celebration and awards event held at Homerton College, Cambridge on 20 March 2008.



Kate Haigh from EEDA, welcomes the delegates

Kate Haigh of EEDA kicked off the proceedings with an overview of the project and its achievements. She highlighted the fact that the project had exceeded original targets in almost every area, and focused on the fact that this was the first time that a partnership had been formed between several environmental business support agencies to give businesses throughout most of the Eastern Region the same level of support.

Following on from Kate Haigh's introduction was keynote speaker Chris Sheldon, who delivered an inspirational talk on how businesses could progress and grow using what they'd achieved and learned through the BETI+ programme.

Chris is a seasoned campaigner for using environmental management systems to effect environmental improvements. He was a member of the BSI committee responsible for drafting the original BS 7750, which later formed the basis for ISO 14001. He was also the chief executive of the Acorn Trust, which promoted BS 8555 - phased implementation of ISO 14001 aimed at smaller businesses. His books are often used as standard texts for university students studying environmental management.

Businesses were given the opportunity to network and exchange ideas and views



Businesses networking and exchanging ideas and views during coffee break

during a mid-morning break before Dr Geoff Brighty of the Environment Agency took the stage. He talked about problems that are already affecting the Eastern Region relating to climate change, such as



Dr Geoff Brighty of the Environment Agency talks about challenges to businesses resulting from climate change

flooding and, ironically, lack of water. Dr

Brighty also outlined the help that is available from The Environment Agency and was keen to point out that its role is not just that of a regulator.

The proceedings ended with Chris Sheldon presenting Awards to companies from all areas participating in the BETI+ programme that had been judged to improve their environmental performance in extraordinary ways throughout the project.



Steve Saunders, CIEH Level 3 tutor, chats to Maureen Raphael of Hain Celestial

BETI+ Celebration Award Winners

Winners and Runners-up

Best SME Winners

Bedfordshire:

GRF Engineering Ltd

Runner up - TE Neville

Cambridgeshire

LifeSpan Catering

Runner-up - JNCC

Hertfordshire & Essex:

Hayman

Runner-up - No Climb

Best Large Company

Bedfordshire

Hain Celestial

Runner-up - Terrapin Ltd

Cambridgeshire:

JRD Rubber Mouldings

Runner-up - Potton

Hertfordshire & Essex:

BioRad

Runner-up - DHL Exel

Best Individual Contribution

Bedfordshire:

Paul Robinson, Terrapin Ltd

Runner up - Garry Hills, T E Neville

Cambridgeshire:

Rob King (Bakkavor)

Runner-up: Tina Nash (Potton)

Hertfordshire & Essex:

Findlay Owen (BioRad)

Runner up - Julia Cooper (Abbey Steel)

Best Overall Company Performance

Casella CEL Ltd

Congratulations go to all the winners and runners-up and also to all the businesses who took part in the Business Environmental Training Initiative Plus (BETI+).



Best individual contribution & Best large company, Hertfordshire & Essex: Findlay Owen, Biorad



Best Large Company Cambridgeshire: JRD Rubber Mouldings



Best SME, Bedfordshire: GRF Engineering



Best large company, Bedfordshire: Hain Celestial



Best SME Cambridgeshire: LifeSpan Catering



Best individual contribution, Bedfordshire: Paul Robinson, Terrapin

Donate your skills by becoming a Trustee of South Bedfordshire Volunteer Centre



If you have skills in marketing, human resources, finance, premises, administration or law, and just a few hours a month to donate, you could give valuable help to local voluntary organisations and community groups.

That's the message of Volunteer Centre South Bedfordshire's new Trustee Recruitment Campaign and they are appealing to local businesses to spread the word to employees.

Trustees come from all walks of life, ensuring organisations are well run and that they remain true to their Vision. Trusteeship is a great way to make a significant difference to a charity or cause that you care about, meet new people, develop skills and build networks.

Currently the Volunteer Centre has 58 opportunities for trustees for 39 organisations across South Bedfordshire.

Getting involved with the local community can be good for business too! Local trustee Karin Laljani, says: "It's a two way thing. I help the charity but I also take back knowledge that helps me in my paid role. I work on my company's sustainability policies, and my trustee role helps educate me on related matters. Working with communities is an increasingly important issue for businesses as well."

Are you interested? Can your organisation promote this campaign to employees – perhaps in a newsletter, website or by distributing leaflets? For more information, call Lucy or Rebecca at Volunteer Centre on 01525 850559, e: volunteer@action-southbeds.org.uk

Your chance to support nature conservation in Bedfordshire



Brimstone butterfly on black knapweed, Photograph courtesy Keith Balmer

GrantScape, the national environmental grant-making charity based in Bedfordshire, will soon be launching a special grant programme to support nature conservation projects in Bedfordshire. This initiative is supported by Bedfordshire County Council and by "BedsLife - Biodiversity Forum for Bedfordshire and Luton".



GrantScape is looking for potential funding partners and/or sponsors to maximise the number of nature conservation projects that can be

supported. For organisations which have made, or which plan to make, the local environment part of their Corporate Social Responsibility agenda, this will provide an excellent opportunity to help conserve our precious habitats and wildlife. Any level of support would be welcome and will be suitably recognised.

Over the last three years, GrantScape has awarded £8 million to 20 major biodiversity projects across England and Wales through its national "Biodiversity Challenge Fund". Additionally, it has supported many more nature conservation projects at a local level. In Bedfordshire, these have included the Bedfordshire Otters and Rivers Project, and habitat works at the Forest of Marston Vale's Millennium Country Park.

For more information, contact Andrew Budd on 01908 545780; or email: andrew.budd@grantscape.org.uk

Businesses could be paying over the odds for WEEE disposal

The recent GBN environmental legislation seminar revealed that confusion relating to the disposal of Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) is still the order of the day.

Guest speaker Jeremy Hay of the Environment Agency focused on the WEEE Regulations explained that businesses are often collecting WEEE separately and paying waste contractors to dispose of it safely. This isn't necessarily a legal requirement.

Under the WEEE Regulations, if you are replacing kit with like-for-like goods (for instance if a business is buying new flat screen computer monitors and getting rid of its old ones), **the company selling the new equipment is obliged to take the old equipment away.** The seller is entitled to charge to transport the old goods, but is not legally allowed to charge for disposal of WEEE.

The same conditions apply to all products that are classified as waste electrical and electronic equipment.

If you are disposing of Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment but not replacing it, you must ensure that it is treated as special or hazardous waste if it falls into that category. Otherwise, you are quite entitled to place it in your usual landfill skip - it doesn't need to be treated any differently.

If in doubt, look on the Environment Agency's website, or email GBN and we'll find out for you. www.netregs.gov.uk or info@gbn-bedfordshire.org.uk

Forest of Marston Vale announces dates for Woodworks! '08

Individuals, charities, businesses and organisations that derive their inspiration, livelihoods or materials from native wood, British woodlands or the British countryside are invited to be part of Woodworks 2008 – the Forest of Marston Vale's annual festival of trees, wood and woodland related crafts, trades, people and knowledge. The event, now in its sixth year, will take place at the Forest Centre and Millennium Country Park, Marston Moretaine, Bedfordshire on 6 and 7 September.

"Woodworks! offers a fantastic opportunity for participants to promote their business," said Alexis Pym, event organiser. "Last year's event attracted over 5000 visitors and featured over 65 trade stands and exhibitors many of whom reported a rise in sales."

For 2008, organisers are delighted to welcome back the British Lumberjack Sports Association (*pictured in action on the right*), who thrilled last year's crowds. New for 2008 is the Woodworks 'Carve-Up' a spectacular group display of chain-saw speed carving.

Visitors can have a go at traditional woodland crafts; discover the art of forest management from traditional horse logging to the use of the latest machinery; 'have-a-go' at archery; find out about green energy and wood fuel, and browse an array of stalls selling arts, crafts, furniture, tools and local produce.

Exhibition stands cost from £75 for the weekend, with discounts available to charities – applications must be made by 30th May. For information, contact Alexis Pym on 01234 762614 or visit www.marstonvale.org/woodworks.



Innovative reuse service now on offer from Wedding Cooperative

Sometimes the best solutions are the most simple. Michelle Butler has just set up a company - The Wedding Cooperative - that offers couples the chance to have a more environmentally friendly wedding that will save costs.

Michelle explains how the idea for the business came about: "During the course of arranging my own wedding, I found that a lot of items I wanted would never be used again and would probably be thrown away. I had an idea... Reuse."

She has now taken the initiative to set up a website on similar lines to a materials exchange, but for wedding paraphernalia.

So, for instance, if couples have items that are in excellent condition, such as silk flowers, vases, cake stands, ribbons, balloons, bunting, glasses, napkins, table cloths, seat covers, sashes, favours....., they can advertise them free of charge on the Wedding Cooperative website.

Couples looking for items that have only been used once can then contact Michelle with their "wish lists". They pay the owner direct and Michelle takes a small administrative commission.

Items may be once-used, or used several times and can be readvertised on the website if they're still in good condition.

For more information, visit www.the-wedding-co-op.com, or call Michelle on 07941 918399.

Green Buying helps small businesses to meet the environmental challenge

Greenbuying.co.uk has just launched its online business to business website, providing UK businesses with the ability to source genuinely environmentally friendly business products and services. The site also offers interesting articles, case studies and daily news stories relating to sustainable procurement.

Matt Roper, managing director, says: "We set up the site as we felt that there was a lack of clear direction for buyers within small and medium sized organisations who sought to procure in a more sustainable, ethical manner. Our vision is to provide an online portal which is easy to use whilst providing buyers with reassurance that the products and services being promoted are genuinely eco-friendly."

Team member and environmental consultant David Brown says: "Addressing pressing environmental issues, such as climate change, requires the efforts of smaller businesses and organisations as well as those in the public spotlight. Green Buying offers advice and solutions to help such organisations make simple yet meaningful changes to tackle the challenges we face."

Some of our members will be familiar with Matt Roper, who delivered the Greening Your Supply Chain seminar last year and we are anticipating inviting him back to present again later this year.



He is keen for GBN members to complete a market survey on the Green Buying website, and in return for this this, you can get a 5% discount off your first transaction on the website. Visit <http://www.greenbuying.co.uk/marketsurvey.php> to complete the survey.

The site is also on the look out for suppliers who sell genuinely green business supplies/services to advertise on the Green Buying Website or in a newly launched green suppliers directory.

Businesses may also want to benefit from some free publicity for their successes on the Green Buying Website by emailing across a word document with the details of how you've reduced your carbon footprint together with a photograph.

You can contact Matt Roper on 0845 217899, or visit www.greenbuying.co.uk

Also, please remember that the Bedfordshire and Luton Sustainable Business Partnership (BLSBP) website also has an Eco-directory of local environmental goods and services. To request an entry, please contact info@gbn-bedfordshire.org.uk or to check out local goods and services on offer visit: www.blsbp.co.uk

Events and Training

Environmental Management Seminars

GBN's Environmental Management Seminars are funded by Bedfordshire County Council and are free to GBN members. Guests are welcome to attend one seminar free of charge, and thereafter will be charged £25.00+VAT per delegate, per seminar.

Unless otherwise stated, all seminars are held at The Forest Centre, Marston Moretaine, and start promptly at 08.30 with networking and breakfast available from 08.00. We aim to finish in the form on the GBN website (www.gbn-bedfordshire.org.uk) to book your place.

21 May 2008

Environmental Performance Improvement

We will look at evaluating environmental performance and setting realistic objectives and targets. This session explain the use of environmental performance indicators (EPIs) to help you understand, demonstrate and improve your performance. A workshop will give ideas on how EPIs could be used in your organisation.

25 June 2008

Integrating Your Systems

In this session, we will look at how environmental management systems can be developed to integrate with other management systems you may already have in place, such as quality or health and safety.

16 July 2008

Aspects and Impacts - Environmental Risk Assessment

This session will focus on your environmental aspects and impacts, pollution prevention, and how to conduct realistic risk assessments in order to prevent any potential incidents occurring.

17 September 2008

Corporate Social responsibility with guest speaker - John Luff

To book, visit GBN's website at www.gbn-bedfordshire.org.uk

CIEH L3 Environmental Management Course

Starting in May, GBN will be running a CIEH Level 3 Environmental Management Course, which is a must for anyone responsible for implementing or running an Environmental Management System to ISO 14001.

The five-day course, which leads to a nationally recognised qualification on successfully passing the examination, covers all the topics you'll need to understand, implement and run an EMS.

Dates and venues are as follows:

22 May	Forest Centre, Marston Moretaine
5 June	Schuco, Milton Keynes
12 June	Schuco, Milton Keynes
19 June	The Rufus Centre, Ampthill
3 July	The Forest Centre
17 July (exam)	The Forest Centre

The qualification covers the following topics:

- The environmental context
- The management context
- Environmental aspects
- Environmental policy
- Environmental management programme
- Environmental management techniques
- Environmental auditing
- Environmental reporting
- Environmental legislation
- Environmental management standards
- Environmental management

CIEH Level 3 certificate holders are also recognised as becoming "legally competent" under the ISO 14001 and BS 8555 environmental management standards.

The cost to members per delegate will be £550 +VAT, non-members £700 +VAT.

You can book by calling 01234 241411, email: info@gbn-bedfordshire.org.uk, or by visiting the GBN website at: www.gbn-bedfordshire.org.uk.

Capital grants available for bio-energy projects

A new round of the Bio-energy Capital Grants Scheme has just been launched. The scheme supports the installation of biomass-fuelled heat and combined heat and power projects in the industrial, commercial and community sectors.

It is open to industrial, commercial and community sectors, but excludes individuals and householders. The grants will cover up to 40% of the difference in cost of installing the biomass boiler or CHP plant compared to the fossil fuel alternative to a maximum of £100,000.

Applications must be submitted by 20 May 2008. For more details, visit www.bioenergycapitalgrants.org.uk

A further round of grants may be available in the Autumn.

Useful Websites

www.gbn-bedfordshire.org.uk

www.blsbp.co.uk

www.bedfordshire-waste-exchange.co.uk

www.carbontrust.co.uk

www.environment-agency.gov.uk

www.edie.net

www.enviowise.gov.uk

www.detr.gov.uk

www.netregs.gov.uk

GBN Contacts



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