

Environmental Audit Summary

We have consistently performed well in BM TRADA independent environmental audits since we first achieved the ISO 14001 standard in 2006.

“Extremely professional organisation exhibiting satisfactory compliance to documented system. No non-conformities raised indicating strong management dedicated to the standard and its ongoing integrity. Company congratulated on their efforts”.

BM Trada Auditor 2006

“There is a strong commitment to improving the company environmental impact”.

BM Trada Auditor Nov. 2009

“In conclusion the organization has appeared to have continually maintained and implemented a robust system to meet the requirements of ISO9001:2008 and ISO14001:2004”.

BM Trada Auditor Jan 2011

Our continual progress could not work without the shared drive and commitment of all the staff to Environmental and Corporate Social Responsibility activities, as demonstrated from our award from the AJ100 (Architects Journal) for South West Practice of the Year to high staff participation in working on St Pius X School's memorial garden as part of Give and Gain Day.

Since the last environmental report by AWW's ISO 14001 Co-ordinator in Jan 2011 we have pursued the following initiatives:

1. Printing reduction initiatives

- Print job reporting enables us to track usage on the printers and identify the source of significant use in terms of quantity or use of colour. Making staff aware of monitoring can in itself discourage careless use whereby printing is done incorrectly and wasted, or needlessly when electronic forms of storage or transfer would be more useful.
- A move over to a paperless system especially in all administrative activities where for example we used to print and store many paper files.

2. AWW Transport Statement

A Staff commuting survey was conducted in March 2011 showing an increase in public transport and reduction in car usage:

- Train or tube = 22% (up from 15% in 2009)
- Bus = 10% (up from 5% in 2009)
- Car/motor cycle = 16% (down from 36% in 2009)
- Walking = 25% (down from 34% in 2009)
- Cycle = 25% (up from 10% in 2009)

3. We have also joined the West of England Carbon Challenge (WECC) who broadly share the same aims as Bristol Green Capital but have a more specific agenda.

WECC asks its members to make a pledge to cut carbon emissions in their business activity by 10% over 4 years. They offer the use of a carbon calculator to assess members progress in doing so. This is a way of publicly demonstrating an environmental commitment and taking part in information sharing and other networking opportunities offered by the groups' coordinators. This initiative is important to us because in order to maintain the environmental standard ISO14001 we are formally audited twice a year by BM TRADA assessors. We are required to show we are trying to achieve low carbon objectives in our day to day office activity by, for example our resourcing and waste streams, and in our service by assisting clients in achieving BREEAM standards and designing to sustainable principles.

Overview

Office projects

Ystrad Mynach, a completed project for an FE college in Caerphilly, won a BREEAM Green award last Year. It has also been entered in the sustainability section of the RICS awards 2011. The college has commissioned us to do a feasibility on Phase 2 which will also be designed to (at least) BREEAM Excellent. Many current office projects have a formal BREEAM pre-assessment, others have a target rating for potential future assessment. All three local Planning Authorities - Bath, Bristol and South Gloucester -now incorporate a Project specific Sustainability Profile or Questionnaire on planning applications. We are also working on University Square, Stratford - officially this has a requirement of BREEAM 'excellent' but we are aiming for BREAAM 'outstanding'.

The list of current and recently completed projects with their environmental standard is regularly updated.

Networking

The Bristol office continues to be members of Bristol Green Capital initiative and are featured on their website. This is a network of local businesses who wish to pledge their support for a greener environment in their work practices. As part of the network we have submitted a case study on Ystrad Mynach. We also receive regular mailings from Low Carbon south West (LCSW) which is a similar group from a wider geographical area, and Net Regs to keep us up to date with new legislation on waste management

Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

Feedback analysis of CPD's is part of our Business Management System (BMS). Last year we have had an in house CPD given by management on our approach to sustainability in the different sectors of our work. Visiting CPD sessions included a CPD on solar power given by Eco2 Solar on which was followed up with internal document circulation on the company intranet. A recent CPD from Wienerberger concerned the use of natural clay walling as an alternative to traditional concrete block masonry.

Environmental Costings Summary - 2010

Each year the company lists and analyses its energy use in areas such as electricity, transport, printing and other office activities. The aim is monitor and compare energy costs year on year, spot trends and generally try and to reduce wasteful use of resources

Print and Stationery

Printers

We now lease fewer A3 format printers and have replaced two large format printers with a single high quality A1/ A0 printer from OCE which uses the same environmentally managed paper type as previously and has good environmental credentials..

Paperless office

We are gradually using significantly less paper than previously - the 'paperless' effect has made a difference. This was kick started by a briefing to all office staff in December 2008 and seems to have reached a natural balance. Waste prints are now collected at the end of each week and kept so that we get an idea of the waste over the year.

Black and white double sided copying

We expect toner/ ink costs to start to fall since computer default settings were changed to black and white and double sided. This will also save printer maintenance costs since we will qualify for a lower cost maintenance band. Staff now have to specifically choose the colour option if this is required.

Waste

At the beginning of this year the management of the building took control of all waste streams because it was the most efficient way of dealing with landfill and recycling waste from the various tenants. Each company stores its waste in the appropriate external bin and this is collected by a single company. We have checked their Environmental Agency Registration documentation.

Segregation of waste

Segregation of different types of recycling materials, now including plastic, is working well and cleaners are responding to it in how waste is removed and stored before collection.

Our waste carrier is now able to take all types of plastic including plastic bags. Recycling bins are in place in the kitchen and appropriately signed. Paper recycling bins are scattered in the general office areas. We would ideally like to recycle food waste too but there is no commercial service available at present.

Alternatives / avoidance of Landfill use

Alternatives to landfill are pursued whenever practical. Our skip provider – MC Roberts has informed us that they now sort all skip materials for recycling in their yard so they do not need recycling at source. We do, however, periodically remind staff to keep paper products separate for recycling in the normal way and this has been achieved.

If we have samples or items that would be useful for educational or recreational purposes we offer them to the **Scrap Store** in St Pauls rather than putting them out for landfill collection.

The Bristol Office operates a permanent Donation Point behind Reception for staff to bring in bags of unwanted household goods which are collected by St Peters Hospice.

Travel

Car travel

Petrol costs have remained steady. The company has modern, fuel efficient vehicles such as the Smart car and Honda Civic (hybrid). There is a common practice amongst staff now to opt for the less comfortable but more fuel efficient vehicle for local journeys (also easier to park)

Trains

Train journeys are encouraged whenever practical for longer journeys although it is one of our greatest monthly costs. Advance planning of journeys is cheaper but not always possible.

Cycling

Plans for an office folding bicycle have been put on hold due to economic constraints. This however will be pursued as soon as means allow. It would be an invaluable asset for local trips and also as a stepping stone from train station to meeting destination etc. This often deters public transport use in favour of the car. Cycle leasing has been researched and found only to be available for short term hire.

Staff are able to use their own bicycles if they want for office travel and would be reimbursed at the official rate of 20p/mile. A recent survey of office cyclists noted 12 of approximately 45 staff who regularly or periodically cycle.

Alternatives to travel.

Web conferencing was trialled in 2009. However it will not be pursued further in the near future because of the substantial annual fee required for the service and lack of potential use, at least at the moment. Use of telephone conferencing has increased.

Staff facilities

An Eco-water heater from Greencare has been installed as an alternative to continually using kettles to heat up water for tea and coffee. This has significantly contributed to energy saving convenience for staff in Bristol. The London and Plymouth offices are sufficiently small that eco-heaters are not required.

Since the re-location of all staff on one floor the office environment has also drastically improved with the creation of a welcoming, bright reception and meeting room area and busy but orderly open working office space. Being on one floor makes it much easier for us to communicate with each other and know what's going on.