



Improving your resource efficiency

Reduce your impact on the environment and save money

Business Link can support the growth of your business by helping you reduce costs and your environmental impact.

The improving your resource efficiency service is an EU funded programme specifically for small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) aspiring to make significant environmental efficiency improvements.

Key features of the programme

Our enhanced specialist support includes:

- Independent support and advice from a dedicated specialist adviser.
- Assistance with identifying areas for improvement and savings.
- Production of an agreed plan to maximise business benefits and carbon savings.
- Sourcing the right support and any appropriate funding to help you implement the plan.
- Ongoing assistance to help you make use of your environmental credentials to gain competitive advantage.

Is there a cost?

Business Link provides this service free of charge; however your business will need to commit the internal time and resource to implement the agreed plans over a minimum time frame of 12 months. Any additional external support if agreed will require a financial contribution from the business.

Who is eligible?

Businesses must be located in South West England and will need to demonstrate:

- aspirations and ability to grow,
- a desire to achieve a step change in their product or process to improve their sustainability,
- willingness and capacity to implement changes.

Some sectors are excluded from this programme e.g. publicly funded organisations, agriculture, shipbuilding and fisheries.

Other European funding restrictions may apply, including 'de minimus' aid.

To check your eligibility please contact your specialist Business Link adviser, by phoning 0845 600 9966.

Case study

Please see overleaf to find out how the Connaught Hotel has benefitted from efficient use of resources.

Next steps

To benefit from the improving your resource efficiency programme, please contact us:

Tel. **0845 600 9966**

Email. iyre@businesslinksw.co.uk





Connaught Hotel

Case study

Putting the environment at the heart of your business can bring clear advantages as Connaught Hotel proves.

"It is Connaught Hotel's strong focus on reducing its environmental impact that gives it a competitive advantage in a crowded market place."

Bournemouth's independent Connaught Hotel, an 83-room, AA three-star hotel with a top merit rating of 82 per cent – part of the Best Western group, is using its multi-million pound on-going refurbishment and development programme to make it as sustainable as possible.

That means analysing all aspects of the business to gauge their impact on the environment and looking for improvements.

Customers want sustainability

Managing director David Miller says: "This is really important to us. It's the future and I think before long every hotel will need to look at its environmental impact. There are a number of organisations and private individuals who just won't stay in a hotel unless it is making efforts to be more sustainable.

"We also know this is hugely important in the corporate market as more and more companies are adopting policies of only using venues that adhere to their own environmental stance."

In 2007 with the support of Business Link they enlisted the help of The Carbon Trust to audit the hotel and in 2008 joined the Green Tourism Business Scheme (GTBS) to find out how it could reduce its impact on the

environment. Shortly afterwards a GTBS assessor visited the Connaught Hotel to check over its facilities.

"We were already doing a lot of things that were reducing our environmental impact but we hadn't realised it," says Maria Ruiz purchasing manager and member of Connaught's 'green team'.

"For instance, we already had energy-saving infra red light sensors in all the bedrooms which are activated by movement and go off when someone leaves the room.

"The assessor came up with other things we could do such as insulate the water tanks and lag pipes. We also put thermostats on heaters in the public areas to cut down on energy use.

Local environment

The hotel promotes the use of public transport to guests, promotes local attractions and will arrange bikes for hire to encourage guests to be more aware of the local environment. There is also a commitment to use local trades people, stock Fairtrade items and use products wherever possible from sustainable sources.

David, concludes: "It's not usually the first thing that guests think about, but having an environmental policy and receiving a Silver Award for it is important. I'm sure it will become more so as time goes on and concern for the environment becomes more mainstream."