



# Improving your resource efficiency

## Reduce your impact on the environment and save your business money

**Business Link can support the growth of your business by helping you to reduce costs and to minimise your impact on the environment.**

Our **improving your resource efficiency** service is an EU-funded programme for small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) looking to save money by reducing their environmental impact.

### What we offer

Our expert support includes:

- Independent help and advice from a dedicated specialist.
- Identifying areas for improvement and savings.
- Producing a plan to maximise business benefits and carbon savings.
- Sourcing the right support and funding, where appropriate, to help you implement the plan.
- Advice on how to use your environmental credentials to gain competitive advantage.

### How much will it cost?

Business Link provides this service free of charge. In return, we require you to commit the necessary time and resource to implement the agreed plans over a minimum of 12 months.

### Who is eligible?

To benefit from this free service, your business must be based in South West England and will need to demonstrate:

- aspirations and ability to grow
- desire to improve your products or processes, and to become more sustainable as a result
- willingness and capacity to implement changes

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

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

To find out whether your business is eligible, call us on 0845 600 9966.

### Case study

Turn over to find out how we helped the Connaught Hotel reduce costs and become more competitive by minimising their impact on the environment.

### What to do next

Get in touch to find out how we can help you improve your resource efficiency and save your business money.

Contact Business Link

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# Connaught Hotel

## Case study

### **Putting the environment at the heart of your business can bring clear advantages, as Bournemouth's Connaught Hotel has discovered.**

"It's our strong focus on reducing our environmental impact that gives us a competitive advantage in a crowded market place," says Connaught Hotel managing director, David Miller.

Part of the Best Western group, this independent, three-star AA rated hotel is using its multi-million pound ongoing refurbishment and development programme to become as sustainable as possible.

We helped the hotel to analyse all aspects of the business, to gauge their impact on the environment and to develop a plan to minimise this impact wherever possible.

### **Competitive edge**

Customers are increasingly using sustainability as a deciding factor when choosing a hotel, as David explains: "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. A growing number of organisations and private individuals simply won't stay in a hotel unless it's 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, the Connaught Hotel enlisted The Carbon

Trust to carry out an audit of 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 inspect its facilities.

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

"For example, we already had energy-saving movement-activated sensors in the bedrooms that switch the lights off when someone leaves the room.

"The assessor came up with other things we could do, such as insulating our water tanks and lagging pipes. We also installed thermostats on heaters in the hotel's public areas, to reduce our energy use."

### **Thinking global, acting local**

The Connaught promotes the use of public transport and local attractions to guests, and arranges bike hire to encourage them to be more aware of the local environment.

The hotel is committed to supporting local businesses, and to buying products from Fairtrade and sustainable sources wherever possible.

David concludes: "Having an environmental policy and receiving a silver award for it is important to us as a business, and to our customers. I've no doubt that, over the coming months and years, it will become even more important, as concern for the environment becomes more mainstream."