



CEO Report 2005

- I would like to thank the Board of Directors for their continuing support and guidance and for their time and involvement with the organization.
- I am also grateful for Ralph Hepworth's role as our prime contact to Advantage West Midlands which has provided advice and guidance that has been invaluable. MEBC is very aware of its commitments to AWM and the RES and this effective working relationship is essential if we are to play an effective role. It was also good to see Dr Simon Slater join AWM and we look forward to developing good working relationships too with Simon.
- I was very pleased when we were able to focus our programme of events in a way that helped AWM's awareness raising about resource efficiency. Funded by DEFRA's Business Resource Efficiency and Waste project via AWM, we have successfully staged a number of events in partnership with MEBC members such as Severn Trent, Mouchel Parkman and the Environment Agency. These have been wide ranging and included to date:
 - Rural resource management
 - Land clean up
 - The TAHI project – or as someone at our visit said – “a fuel gauge for homes”
 - Hazardous waste review at the EA
 - Visit to the remarkable EcoPod of the Black Country Housing Trust

I am grateful to Jennie Middleton for her work in organising this programme of events.

- **Membership**

Membership remains the greatest challenge to MEBC. A huge number of businesses gain benefit from the activity – projects and open meetings - of the organisation but too few are members. Indeed, we also need new blood on the MEBC Board and I appeal for help from the Directors and members in the recruitment of new volunteers to the Board (especially from the engineering and manufacturing sector) and new members in general.

- **Projects**

NISP in the West Midlands has continued to hit all its targets and be seen as a flagship project for AWM. NISP has moved on to become a major national industrial symbiosis programme, funded now nationally via the BREW fund but still with RDA support and involvement. A report from the NISP-WM programme will be tabled at the AGM. I am grateful to Dr Adrian Murphy for his management of the project in the West Midlands.

WindSupply is another project with its origins within MEBC but which also has now gone national. Established to try and link UK manufacturing and engineering to the developing needs of the growing UK wind energy industry, the arrival within the project of ALSTOM, formerly GEC Rugby, and its exciting re revolutionary new turbine has added a major new focus to this initiative. I would like to recognise the efforts of Bob Dorman in leading this activity. A report from WindSupply will be tabled at the AGM

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- **Case Studies**

From the sublime to the ridiculous! Following the success of the 2004 Portfolio of Case Studies demonstrating sustainable development implementation, it seemed logical to publish another in 2005. Getting case studies was like sucking blood from stones and it seemed the aspiration was to be thwarted. However, with help from strategic partners such as Groundwork and EnviroWise, a sudden rush happened just before the final deadline resulting in the 2005 version consisting of 37 case studies, more than last year!

Published jointly with the BCSD-UK, the 2005 Portfolio has been published on the web site of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development and resulted in the following comment from Jonathon Porritt: "I hugely enjoyed catching up on all of these and seeing just how imaginative some of the solutions to today's problems really are."

- Eversheds event

The BCSD-UK launched the Portfolio in the House of Commons. MEBC undertook a regional launch hosted in Birmingham by Eversheds. Both events were designed to use the Portfolio as an excuse for bringing together political and business contacts to review progress on sustainable development.

I am grateful for David Smith, Leader of Lichfield Council and Chairman of both the WMLGA and the Regional Assembly for agreeing to be chairman at this.

Unexpectedly stuck as I was in Wick General Hospital when I should have been managing this event, I was grateful to Debbie Dorman in stepping in to make sure it ran as planned.

Just as the BCSD-UK has established its House of Commons event as a regular event on the calendar, so I hope the event MEBC staged at Eversheds should also become an annual activity.

- Future AGM/Dinner

I think we need to consider splitting the AGM and Dinner. The pilot event in 2004 was a sell out dinner and quite a lot of people came to the AGM. However, it was difficult for people to do both and this year we have made a clear divide between the two, albeit on the same evening at the same venue. The result is a low turnout for the AGM so I recommend that in the future we divide the two on the calendar.

I am still keen to develop an awards aspect to the dinner but we have still yet to find the sponsorship to make that happen.

- PowerPoint CD

New this year is the CD Rom with a PowerPoint introduction to the MEBC. Please help raise the profile of the organisation by distributing these to business contacts.

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