

## UK Public Health Association (UKPHA) & Bournemouth International Centre (BIC) Sustainable Conferencing - Case Study

### *Working together to reduce our impact on the environment*

Reducing the environmental impact of a large conference in Bournemouth with over 800 delegates was a challenge that the UK Public Health Association (UKPHA), an established Public Health national association, and the Bournemouth International Centre tackled together when planning the UKPHA 18<sup>th</sup> Annual Forum held earlier this year.

#### The Challenge

Unlike larger corporate organisations and as a registered charity, UKPHA are unable to offset environmental impact with cash, so the UKPHA and the BIC had to work together to devise innovative ways to support and encourage delegates to reduce their individual impact on the environment before, during and after their two day Forum held in March 2010.

The UKPHA needed to be mindful of retaining the value of the Forum whilst at the same time removing many tangible Forum 'perceived benefits' such as paper reports, handouts and conference bags.

*"At the heart of the UKPHA is one of our core objectives - to lead the way in promoting sustainable development and ensuring healthy environments for future generations. Eco footprinting plays an ever more important role in helping organisations to analyse their own impact on our fragile environment and how we can protect it for future generations."*  
Angela Mawle, Chief Executive, UK Public Health Association.

#### The Solution

With delegate, supplier and partner support, environmentally friendly initiatives were implemented to help redefine the Forum whilst retaining the value of the experience to the delegates.

#### What Eco initiatives were introduced?

- **The Bournemouth International Centre (BIC):** Working closely with the venue was key to achieving success. For the BIC, Bournemouth's primary conference venue, paper, cardboard, glass and plastic recycling is in place as standard. To save on

unnecessary energy consumption during the Forum, escalators were switched off as were the lighting and heating for rooms when not in use.

*"The Bournemouth International Centre is totally committed to working with clients to help reduce their environmental impact on the town. By helping our clients to achieve their own environmental objectives, looking at ways to reduce energy consumption and helping to source sustainable food, travel, leisure activities and entertainment for conference delegates, we are also achieving our own Green objectives, helping to create sustainable conferencing in Bournemouth without compromising on a quality experience."*  
Clive Tyers, Head of Conferences, Exhibitions & Events, Bournemouth International Centre.

- **Travel:** In Bournemouth, Transdev Yellow Buses created a bespoke bus route plan to help delegates reach the venue and hotels minimising the need for car travel.
- **Our delegates' 'hands on' approach:** A sustainable travel competition, sponsored by Best Foot Forward, encouraged delegates to think twice when planning their travel to the Forum in order to make the most eco friendly choices. This certainly had an impact on many of our delegates, with the winner of this competition certainly adopting creative travel methods to get to Bournemouth!

*"The UKPHA Eco initiative travel competition was a great idea, and fun to take part in. Without it, I may well have driven to Bournemouth from my home in Taunton. As it was I took the train the night before to Bristol and then had an extremely pleasant journey through the centre of Bristol on the ferry (having uni-cycled to the river), a short bus ride later and I was in a pub with an old friend. An early start got me to Bournemouth by train before taking the UKPHA provided buses to the conference venue. So I was able to visit a friend, get work done on the train and save the environment all in one go - who needs cars!"* Rob Bethune, Clinical Advisor to the Regional Director of Public Health, South West Strategic Health Authority

- **Healthy, sustainable diet:** All food was locally sourced where possible. Delegates were provided with a nutritious, vegetarian diet, smoothies and fresh fruit. The all new UKPHA Kitchen Experience demonstrated how to pass on healthy eating tips to the local community.
- **Goodbye to conference handouts & bags:** Key messages and information were communicated via electronic publications online and via USB memory sticks which replaced paper intensive handouts. In previous years, around 900 conference bags per year were made from environmentally friendly materials. In 2010, conference bags were not produced. Delegates were encouraged to bring their own bag to use

at the Forum. Bag making and decoration workshops were held in the BIC foyer where delegates customised an old bag, or picked up one of the bags made from recycled materials.

### **UKPHA Eco results announced!**

Between the 2008 and 2009 Forums, the UKPHA achieved a 35% reduction in carbon dioxide and a 33% reduction in the eco footprint. The UKPHA targeted for 2010 an ambitious additional 10% reduction in carbon dioxide and an additional 10% reduction in the eco footprint.

The UKPHA 2010 Annual Forum that took place in Bournemouth reached and surpassed its eco footprint targets! Results showed that in 2010 the Forum produced **61 tonnes of carbon dioxide** and had an **eco footprint of 21 global hectares**. The Forum has therefore not only met and exceeded its targets set for 2010 but has also achieved an overall reduction since 2008 in both its CO2 emissions and its eco footprint by an amazing 45% and 49% respectively!

*“Initiatives such as this, have helped the BIC to achieve year on year reductions in electricity & gas consumption, with current CO2 emissions from the BIC over 500 tonnes per year less than the recorded 2006-07 levels.”* Martin Belbin, Head of Building & Technical, Bournemouth International Centre.

*“We are delighted with these results and are extremely proud to be leading the way in sustainable conferencing for associations. We do appreciate however that there is still some way to go before a fully sustainable Forum is realised but with the support of our delegates, suppliers and partners, we believe that we can continue to reduce our impact on the environment year on year.”* Angela Mawle, Chief Executive, UK Public Health Association.

One of the targets UKPHA are looking to set for future Forums will be focused on per delegate reductions in CO2 and eco footprint. Everyone CAN make a difference.

**Ends**

### Notes to Editors:

UKPHA is a unifying and powerful voice for the public's health and well being in the UK, focusing on the need to eliminate inequalities in health, promote sustainable development and combat anti-health forces.

The UK Public Health Association - known by the initials UKPHA - is an independent voluntary organisation, formed by the coming together of three organisations in 1999 to unite the public health movement in the UK.

As a multidisciplinary membership organisation, the UKPHA brings together individuals and organisations from all sectors who share a common commitment to promoting the public's health.

We seek to promote the development of healthy public policy at all levels of government and across all sectors. We act as an information platform and aim to support those working in public health both professionally and in a voluntary capacity.

Contact the UKPHA on [info@ukpha.org.uk](mailto:info@ukpha.org.uk) or on 020 7713 8910

[www.ukpha.org.uk](http://www.ukpha.org.uk)

### **The Bournemouth International Centre**

The Bournemouth International Centre is managed and operated by BH Live, a Company Limited by Guarantee (with Charity Commission Status pending). BH Live Enterprises Ltd has been established to manage the non charitable activities, primarily relating to Conferences and Exhibitions.

The Bournemouth International Centre is a premier UK conference, entertainment and hospitality venue. The BIC has flexibility for everything from multi-hall conferences and exhibitions to smaller more intimate meetings.

The BIC was short listed for Meet England's Business Tourism Award by South West Tourism Awards 2008-2009. It was also short listed for the World's Best Congress Centre award according to world industry association, the International Association of Congress Centres (AIPC). Bournemouth won Best UK Resort at the 2009 Group Leisure Awards for the second year running.

**For more information, please contact:**

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