



Business Opportunity In A Changing World

Community Land Trusts, flood defences and waste water reuse feature at MEBC event.

Entitled “Business Opportunity In A Changing World”, an MEBC workshop staged at Martineau in Birmingham on May 19 highlighted the need for a real understanding of what the Midlands region of the UK has to offer a world that is undergoing massive change. Unless we do, it was argued, how can expect those searching for expertise, products and services to come and shop in our region?

MEBC is the region’s longest running business network to focus on sustainable development and is the Midlands branch of the Business Council for Sustainable Development – United Kingdom, the UK’s only branch of the World Business Council.

David Middleton, CEO of both the MEBC and BCSD-UK, highlighted examples of business responding to the changes. In particular, he quoted Paul Polman, CEO of Unilever who, speaking at a recent World Business Council event in Montreux, said business as usual was not an option. Unilever plans to double its turnover by focussing on emerging new markets but to decouple the company’s expansion from the environment. The commitment is to minimise growth impact on the world’s depleted resources and its struggling environment.

Paul Mountain, a partner at host legal firm, Martineau gave a detailed promotion of the concept of Community Land Trusts (CLTs) as a movement that could potentially transform the way we own, use and value land.

One company maximising business opportunity from the repercussions of climate change is Droitwich based UK Flood Barriers. Guest speaker, Sarah Vaughan, the company’s Managing Director, told delegates about their non-invasive methodology of flood management and how they use local firms in the production of their flood defence system.

Steve Goodwin, Director of new MEBC member and industrial waste water reuse specialist Aquabio, highlighted case studies from this highly successful company. Aquabio has its head office in Worcester, employs some 20 people and has an annual turnover of some £4.2 Million.

In conclusion, David Middleton said these were typical “regional gems” that we should be shouting about to the world. Hugh Dyer, Senior Applied Geologist at Wardell Armstrong, described the UK Flood Barriers presentation as “inspirational” and that of Aquabio as “a compelling insight” while Colin Grenville of E.ON said a good range of topics had been covered at an event which provided him with opportunities to discuss new business development.

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**Business Council for
Sustainable Development
United Kingdom**

The MEBC is the official branch in the Midlands of the BCSD-UK which in turn is the only affiliated branch in the UK of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development