

Introducing Environment Connect

What is Environment Connect?

Environment Connect is a business support sign-posting service operating in the Northwest. The service provides free, confidential advice and practical assistance for businesses and those organisations providing business support in the Northwest. The service is designed to help companies maximise resource efficiency, increase productivity and profitability as a result of reducing waste.

Specifically, Environment Connect is a service for:

- Local Authorities in the Northwest
- Business Link in the Northwest
- Environment Agency

Environment Connect is a new opportunity for businesses to gain commercial success through environmental good practice. Companies will gain access to services and support which will serve to propel the region to the vanguard of environmental excellence.

How Environment Connect works

Environment Connect brings together both regional service providers and national partners, providing one contact point for businesses and organisations wanting to direct companies to environmental support. The service is ideal for local authorities or organisations that are the first point of contact for businesses looking for environmental advice and information.

Businesses can contact Environment Connect either:
via a freephone helpline: 0800 032 0222
or online at: www.environmentconnect.co.uk

Alternatively businesses can:
email savings@environmentconnect.co.uk

Advice is free and confidential and offers practical solutions.



Benefits to business

Environment Connect is the single point of contact to access a host of environmental business services. From legal advice, resource efficiency expertise and waste minimisation to clean technologies, energy management or environmental management systems, Environment Connect makes it simple to find the right support for any business.

The service is designed to deliver bottom-line business benefits by improving the environmental performance of Northwest companies.

Environment Connect can help companies to:

- Save money
- Reduce bills
- Cut operating costs
- Operate legally
- Innovate
- Take advantage of new technologies
- Access new market opportunities
- Increase productivity
- Enhance corporate image

The facts speak for themselves:

- British firms could increase their profits by saving the £1 billion a year they waste on energy.
(Source: The Carbon Trust)
- Waste costs UK business £15 billion each year.
(Source: Envirowise)
- The Northwest has an estimated 700 companies working in the Environmental Technologies and Services Sector, employing 24,000 people with an annual turnover of more than £1.3 billion.
(Source: NWDA)
- Companies with high environmental standards can financially out-perform other companies by up to 43%.
(Source: Environment Agency)



Support

Different businesses have differing needs and one type of support doesn't suit all, which is why Environment Connect exists — to connect businesses to the best possible environmental advice and solutions. Support can be provided at the business premises or at an alternative location as required.

Listed below are common queries that companies may have which Environment Connect can provide information or support on:

- How do I reduce my energy bill?
- How do I reduce my water bill?
- How do I reduce my waste bill?
- How do I make resource efficiency savings?
- How do I access legal advice?
- Can someone visit my company to advise me?
- Can you help me access specific information about my sector?
- Can you advise me on environmental technologies?
- Can you help me find out more about good environmental management?
- How can I implement an environmental management system?
- Can you help me to access training opportunities?
- I want to find out how Environment Connect can help my business?

Events and training

Environment Connect provides access to an increasing number of business events and training opportunities. Getting the right training and skills is one of the best ways to ensure a business secures and maintains a competitive edge.

From the Environment Connect website, businesses can search for an event or they can suggest the type of event or training opportunity they are looking for. Environment Connect can then take steps to match this request with the services and support available in the Northwest.



Background

Environment Connect is part of Defra's Business Resource Efficiency and Waste (BREW) programme.

Over the next three years, the Government is planning to put £284 million of landfill tax back into business. To do this, it has set up a series of delivery programmes that will help businesses reduce waste at every stage of the business cycle and manage their resources more efficiently.

These delivery programmes, which are funded by Defra's BREW programme, are delivered by a number of organisations offering a range of support and services direct to business, including free advice on increasing resource efficiency and developing markets for recycled products and materials. BREW also funds longer-term research programmes which will benefit business in the years ahead.

Funding has been allocated to the BREW programme from 1 April 2005 to 1 April 2008. Funding for the programme beyond 2008 will be considered as part of the next spending review.

Business representatives including the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) and the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) have been involved in the development of the programme, including identifying where the greatest need lies. Annual stakeholder events and web-based consultations feed into the decision making process for funding allocations.

The delivery programmes are aimed particularly at those businesses most affected by the increases in landfill tax. There are benefits for both the environment and for business, through increased profits and the development of new products from waste.

Environment Connect partners

The Northwest Regional Development Agency (NWDA) is coordinating Environment Connect, in partnership with key national and regional stakeholders.

Carbon Trust www.thecarbontrust.co.uk

Defra BREW Programme www.defra.gov.uk/environment/waste/brew

DTI Technology Programme www.dti.gov.uk/technologyprogramme

Envirowise www.envirowise.gov.uk

Environment Agency www.environment-agency.gov.uk

Market Transformation Programme www.mtprog.com

National Industrial Symbiosis Programme (NISP) www.nisp.org.uk

WRAP www.wrap.org.uk

Regional partners

ENWORKS www.enworks.com

Envirolink Northwest www.envirolinknorthwest.co.uk

The Manufacturing Institute www.manu-online.com

How partners can get involved

Environment Connect can help you by providing one place and one contact number for support. Environment Connect provides a co-ordinated solution to business enquiries regarding the environment, waste and resource efficiency.

What can you do?

- Promote Environment Connect within your own organisation – we can provide the marketing materials to help you do this.
- Refer companies looking for support to Environment Connect. We can then identify the right type of support and make the link between the needs of the company and the support available.
- Establish a web link to www.environmentconnect.co.uk from your website.

Find out more

To find out more about Environment Connect please contact: Todd Holden, Project Director, Tel: 0161 236 6348 todd@enworks.com