



uk home energy conservation association



Feedback Report

Delegates were asked to fill in separate feedback forms for the main conference and also the seminars and site visits they'd attended. This enables us to assess individual areas and increase feedback returns. Following the Conference, 64 forms were returned giving a good representation of views. Generally the comments received were very positive, with regular themes emerging about certain aspects of the Conference.

Day 1 speakers: Day one hosted the debate and the morning presentations were predominately devoted to setting the scene on the energy efficiency, renewables and nuclear energy mix. Overall the speakers went down well (92% either excellent or good), each speaker being mentioned as particularly good and/or informative. The debate provoked a lively Q&A session and proved a worthy conference theme. Some thought more questions from the floor could have been beneficial but as the debate was limited to an hour – which went by very quickly – there was only time for a few pre-posed questions and some supplementary ones from the floor. A number of delegates congratulated the Chairman on the first day and the debate. John Chesshire has always been very good at time keeping and provided an insight into his worldly knowledge when participating in the Q&A sessions. The children's performance broke up the presentations and provided a light-hearted take on saving energy, which proved popular.

Day 2 speakers: Day two speakers were also praised for their presentations (84% excellent or good), although some delegates wanted "health" to have a more prominent slot, preferably on the first day. It was by coincidence that the health sector speakers from this year and last appeared in similar slots; we were guaranteed a lively presentation by Dr Passmore so reserved him for the "graveyard slot" to entertain the dying troops. We will however take your views on board

and maybe focus on joined up thinking with the health sector next year.

Under "best aspects of the Conference" on the main feedback form, the most recurrent comments were about the site visits. These went down very well and were considered a welcome break from the main conference room. There were many requests for these to be carried on next year. We will endeavour to do so, pending good site visit opportunities around the West Midlands.

Location: Although the Conference was overseas for most delegates, the public transport links to the hotel were deemed excellent (64%). There was one request for clearer instructions on the booking literature, which will be looked into next year. The venue also provided an opportunity for delegates to explore the local area or pubs across the road.

Accommodation: We were told that the Hotel's refurbishment would be complete before May, but from the feedback, it seemed there was a discrepancy in the quality and content of bedrooms. As this something we would otherwise not be aware of, delegate feedback is vital.

As the Conference organisers, we were not happy with the level of service we received by the Hotel and although this related more to the organisation, delegates did pick up on a few issues and one even commented that "moving back to Marriott hotels next year should be better".

The exhibition area was smaller than previous years and had to be accommodated next to the main room, which caused problems with noise levels. We will be returning to the normal exhibition layout next year, so these problems will have been rectified.

Catering: Although catering didn't do too badly on the scoring front (23% Excellent, 33% Good and 30% Fair) it did received the most amount of negative comments. This was mainly due to

the lunches as there was a lack of fruit and salad and also because the food wasn't labelled and looked the same. We were very disappointed with the lunches and have made the Hotel aware of our thoughts. There was also an issue with the pre-conference dinner menu, as it had the same option as the Gala Dinner, so some guest inadvertently ended up having the same meal both nights. We weren't aware that the same food would be offered - maybe we were naive to think the Hotel would make note and change the menu accordingly. There was also a knock on effect of using the same menu. All vegetarian, vegan or special meals are booked in advance but, at the Gala Dinner, the vegetarian option ran out early. We presume that some delegates who'd had chicken the night before didn't fancy it again and opted for the veggie option instead.

Literature: With over half of delegates thinking literature was good, next year we will be improving our booking confirmation service. We usually send out delegate booking confirmation and information documents via the post, but to save paper, printing and postage costs and to (hopefully) guarantee delivery, we will be using an electronic system next year.

Entertainment: All the entertainment, from the traditional musicians at the pre-conference event to the comedian at the Gala Dinner, had an Irish theme and 62% of responses favoured it Excellent. Someone did however suggest we revert back to using one form of entertainment.

Organisation: Another new aspect to the Conference was the introduction of the Buddy Scheme. The scheme provided new delegates with an opportunity to meet other colleagues and the Conference Steering Group. The scheme was well attended and will continue each year.

The organisation tick box on the feedback form received 67% Excellent votes and there were many positive comments about the organisation.

Overall: The aim of the Conference Steering Group is to organise an annual, national event with relevant topics and at an affordable cost. The Conference is organised by HECA officers for HECA officers with an ethos of education and fun.

We picked out one comment we think sums up the Conference: "I enjoyed the whole Conference. All the speakers were interesting and thought provoking. The speakers were kept to time which meant the whole Conference kept to time. The site visits meant you were not sitting inside for two whole days and provided the opportunity to see something of the area as well as meeting others on the trip. It was two days very well spent. Thank you".

Seminars: All the seminars received good feedback with the majority scoring either Excellent or Good. The combined seminar of Intelligent Metering/EEC3 had mixed reviews and some would have liked more information on IM in the domestic sector. The Northern Ireland Energy Saving Trust Energy Advice Centre Pilot Showcase seminar had positive feedback, especially from delegates from EEACs, and the technical problems didn't hinder ratings. It was difficult to fairly assess the seminar on Low Carbon Building Programme as few forms were completed, but comments stated how comprehensive the information was. The HECA review proved useful, but may have been geared towards management level.

Site visits: There were no negative comments and ratings were predominantly excellent for all the site visits. The Belfast Tour from East to West provided a mixture of history and housing renewable projects with professional delivery. The visit to Oxford Island Nature Reserve took in a number of renewable installations in beautiful surroundings. Delegates looking around the Thermomax Solar Panel Factory were impressed by the level of knowledge of the commentator but found it difficult to hear commentary because of noise on the factory floor.

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