

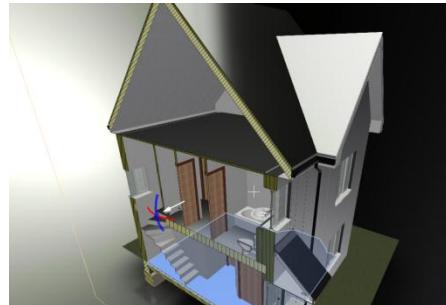


CASE STUDY: ENVIRONMENTAL ECONOMICS

BACKGROUND

Environmental Economics Ltd (EEL) has been delivering energy and sustainability solutions to some of the UK's leading house builders since 2007. Their large group of specialists and assessors work to deliver value enhancing sustainability projects for clients, specializing in low energy buildings and offering a full range of related services in building and construction. They employ 14 staff members. One of their key customers is Barratt Developments – EEL produce the majority of their SAPs and EPCs.

Matthew Roberts, Energy Consultant and ESOS Assessor, is EEL's main point of contact with the School and is responsible for leading the organisation's relationship and sustainability development with the School.



INITIAL ENGAGEMENT

EEL joined the School after Barratt Developments recommended the Homes School to them in early 2016. Prior to this, EEL were unaware that there was such an extensive and proficient knowledge base available to companies who wish to improve their sustainability knowledge and competence. EEL initially engaged with the school in April 2016, and have since been impressed by the vast range of handpicked resources available. They have used a wide range of e-learning and web resources, and have attended two School supplier days.

SELF-ASSESSMENT & ACTION PLAN

As EEL has relatively few employees, it was decided that only one member of staff would carry out the Self-Assessment and act as a Sustainability Champion for the company. With most members of staff specialists in Energy, Energy Management and Sustainability, EEL scored well in most of the questions. Once the Self-Assessment had been completed in April 2016, and the Action Plan produced, EEL could easily see where improvements could be made.

The Action Plan lists ten-points for improvement, based on how the School Member rates itself in the Self-Assessment. EEL found the Ten-Point Action Plan helpful, as whilst it can be relatively straightforward to analyse your own strengths and weaknesses, as it is not always as easy to know how best to fill the knowledge gap.

IMPACT

As a result of engaging with the School, EEL has:

- ✓ **Appointed a Sustainability Champion** who is responsible for driving forward all aspects of sustainability within the business.
- ✓ **Become more aware of the importance of sustainability in the Homes sector** and started to put measures in place to focus on sustainable 'supplier', rather than just 'sustainable supply'
- ✓ **Begun to develop an internal sustainability policy** that elaborates and builds on the current ISO 14001 environmental policy. This was a direct result of viewing an E-Learning Resource outside of their recommended action plan.
- ✓ **Assigned Sustainability Targets to members of staff** – Matthew Roberts is responsible for progressing the company to Gold Membership Status (now achieved), and maintaining this level of membership.
- ✓ **Set up a Specialist Department – BIM Solve** - to offer the construction industry and its supply chain the opportunity to become BIM (Building Information Modelling) ready and realise the sustainability opportunities offered by integrating BIM into their business operations. It was the School's e-learning on BIM, and selection of video materials on the subject that made them aware of the business opportunity around this.
- ✓ **Introduced energy, water and carbon saving solutions** to their business as detailed below, all of which were instigated or influenced by the School's resources:
 - Installed new windows to reduce energy consumption and mitigate overheating in the summer; this was influenced by School's e-learning resource on overheating.
 - Replaced hand dryers with paper towels to reduce energy and recycle the used towels
 - Implemented an energy saving poster campaign to help employees lower their energy use
 - Replaced showers with units that have an 'Eco Mode' to reduce water consumption



BENEFITS

Increased sales and customer based – The creation of the new department, ‘BIM Solve’, and its offering has resulted in new orders from both existing and new clients. As explained above, the School highlighted the growing importance of BIM and helped EEL to identify this business opportunity

Increased competitive advantage – As a result of engaging with the School and working through their action plan, EEL have achieved Gold status with the School. They intend to use their Gold badge in their company literature, on their website, and in their tenders and discussions with customers. With the growing number of main contractors and client Partners to the School, EEL see this as helping to increase their competitive advantage.

Reduced costs – through reduced energy, water and waste consumption

LESSONS LEARNED

It is important to consider the idea of ‘sustainable supplier’ as well as ‘sustainable supply’ – with sustainability becoming increasingly on customers’ radars, it is important to be able to communicate the sustainability credentials of the organisation itself, in addition to the sustainability of your particular product offering.

THE FUTURE

In order for EEL to remain engaged in the School it is important that the School:

- ✓ Continues to improve the website, so that it is easy for the school’s members to keep track of the resources that they have used that are viewed outside of the action plan
- ✓ Develops – the action plan to provide resources that match the company’s needs. Also a forum to exchange ideas/ network/ etc
- ✓ Accredits its learning – would be nice if the e-learning counted towards CPD
- ✓ Continues to grow the number of Partners – and make it easier to network with other members without having to attend supplier days (we shall still attend them, however they are not overly great for networking and not that often in our areas)

