



synnwyrbusnes  
businesssense

# Sustainability Health-check



The Soap Shed  
16 The Terrace  
Rosebush  
Clunderwen  
Pembrokeshire





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## Background



### You

The Soap Shed manufactures and sells hand made natural soaps, shampoos and shaving soaps. The company comprises two people, Liz Hobbs and Stephen Croke, and the products are manufactured in a cottage in the small village of Rosebush in the Preseli mountains area of Pembrokeshire. They have lived in and owned the property for the last seven years. The company was formed a year prior to their move to Rosebush, and was run from a smaller cottage, also in Pembrokeshire.

Sustainability is central to the company – the philosophy behind its development and the brand value of the products, and as such the directors have a very thorough understanding of sustainability issues. They are taking the Sustainability Health-check in order to gain an outside/ objective view of their performance and to avoid complacency. The company holds a Green Dragon Level 2 accreditation.

### Us

*Synnwyr Busnes – Business Sense* (SBBS) is a specialist business support service in sustainable development, based at Bangor University.

It is a service funded by the European Union, the Welsh Assembly Government and Bangor University. The service aims to help SME's in Objective One areas of Wales realise the benefits of thinking and acting sustainably, and telling their customers about it. The service is funded for qualifying businesses, and the assistance given to your company falls under the European Commission's De Minimis Regulation (EC Regulation 69/2001). More information on De Minimis Aid can be found in Appendix A1, while more information on the background to the SBBS health-check can be found in Appendix A2.

The following report provides a summary of your company's performance as reflected by your answers in the sustainability health-check we conducted with you. It covers fifteen "components" of sustainable development and looks at relevant issues in terms of management, performance, extent of concern for issues, and whether action has been taken. Current practices are described and are a starting point for raising awareness and improvement.

The *Synnwyr Busnes Business Sense* health-check report gives a holistic view of sustainable development in your organisation, and may hopefully tie together any previous accreditations, such as Green Dragon or Investors in People.

The health-check was conducted on the 18<sup>th</sup> of March 2008 by Gruffudd Edwards (SBBS), and Liz Hobbs and Stephen Croke, directors of The Soap Shed. The information contained in this report is confidential and is for the use of The Soap Shed only.

## **Disclaimer**

The contents of this report are provided as guide only. No responsibility is accepted by or on behalf of Bangor University for any errors, omissions, or misleading statements in the report. No mention of any organisation, company or individual shall imply any approval or warranty as to the standing and capability of any such organisations, companies or individuals on the part of Bangor University.

## Results



### Introduction

The information and graphs provided here have been designed to provide a management overview of the sustainability performance of The Soap Shed, based on information collected during the health-check, and is a snap-shot of operations at that time. As such, this analysis is a first step in the process of refining your company's working practices and strategies.

The *Synnwyr Busnes - Business Sense* health-check addresses fifteen topics or components of sustainability that need to be considered when evaluating whether a company is working in a sustainable way. A section of the health-check was dedicated to each component. Fourteen of the fifteen components are then ascribed to one of three broad dimensions: Economy, Society and Environment; with the Integration of Sustainable Development serving as an overview of the whole. The components are ascribed as follows:

**Economy:** Business and Finance, Purchasing and Risk Management

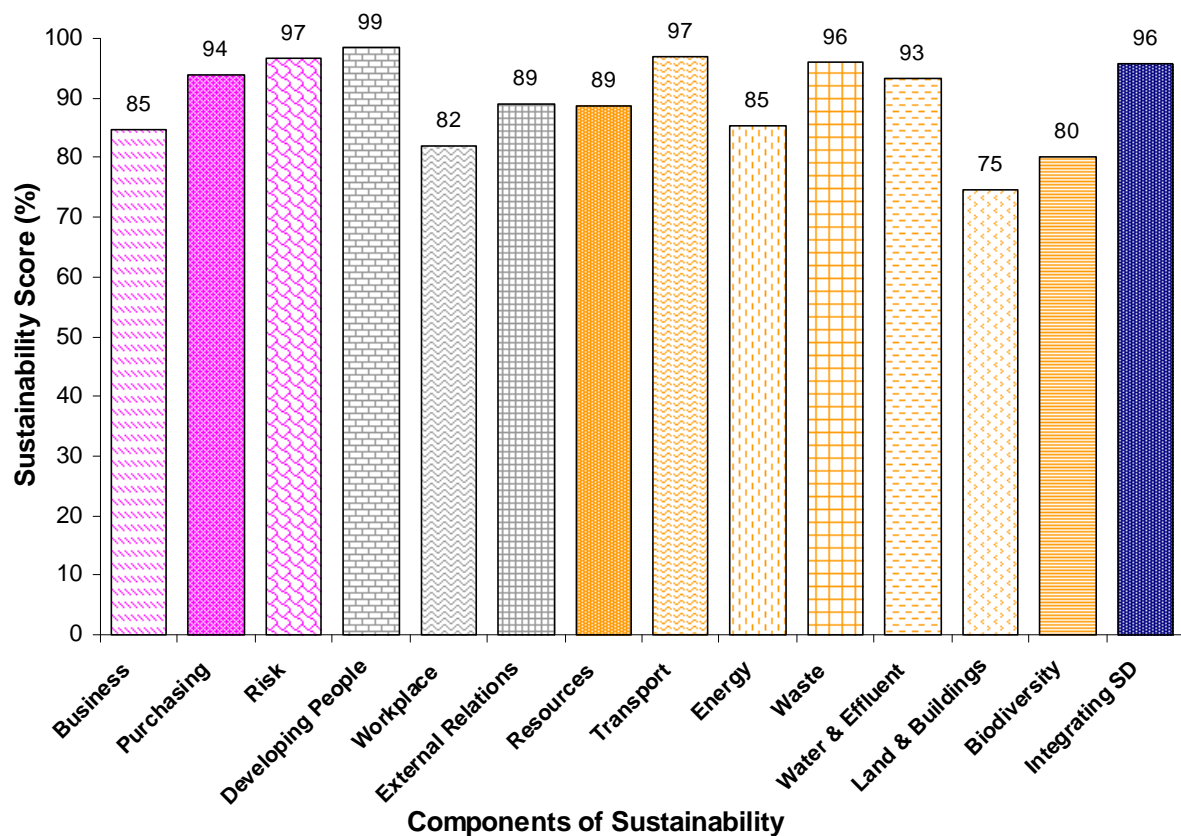
**Society:** Developing People, Workplace and External Relations

**Environment:** Resource Management, Transport, Energy, Air Quality, Waste Management, Water and Effluent, Land & Buildings and Biodiversity

In addition, there were three types of question for each component – (i) management, (ii) performance and (iii) concern and action. The results presented here are based on an analysis of the answers to these questions.

### Component scores

Overall scores for each component have been derived by combining the answers given to the three types of questions, and the results are shown below. The scores are presented as a percentage of the highest possible score for each component, and therefore scores below 100 indicate that some improvements could be made.



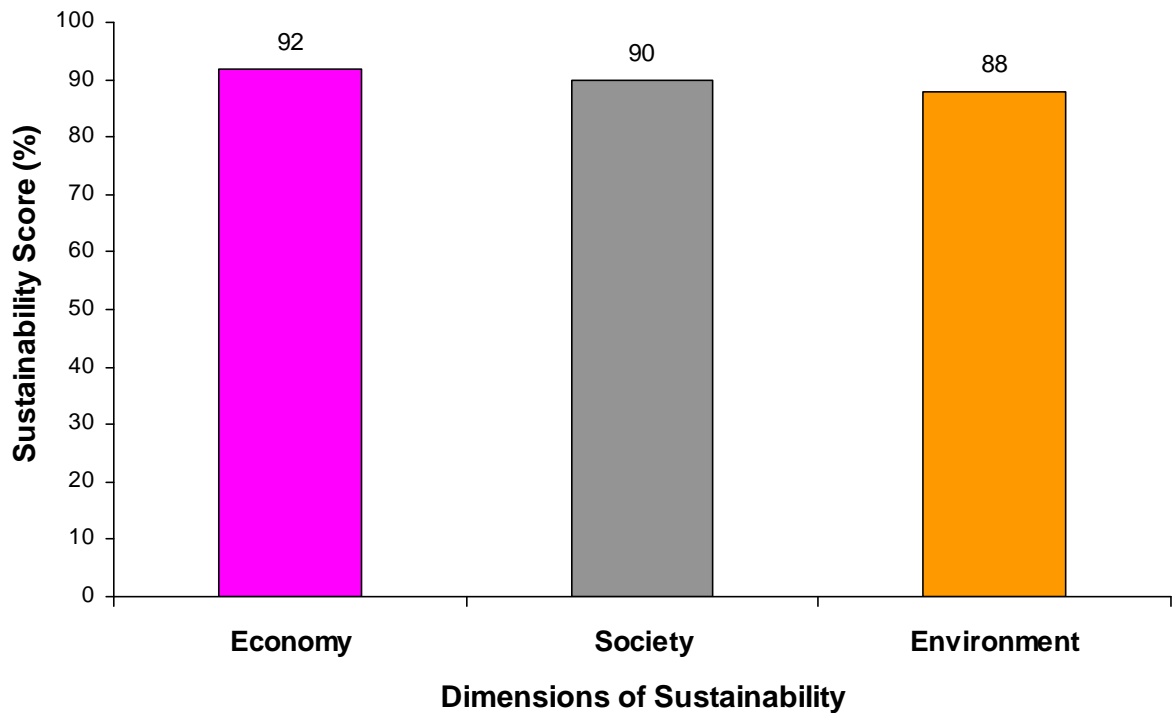
**Figure 1. Individual component scores derived from responses to the management, performance and concern versus action questions.**

The scores are all excellent, with the lowest being 75%, and half above 90%. The 'Air Quality' component was not considered applicable at the time of the health-check, due to the nature of the company's activities. The component scores are discussed in greater detail in the 'Components in detail' section of the feedback.

## Dimension scores

Sustainable development consists of three dimensions – people (society), planet (the environment) and profit (the economy). In order to see whether the company gives equal consideration to these three dimensions the components were allocated to one of the dimensions and the answers given contributed to the score given to that dimension. For example, 'purchasing' contributes to the 'economy' dimension, 'developing people' to the 'society' dimension and 'waste' to the 'environment' dimension. Non-applicable components are not included in the calculations.

The Soap Shed achieved excellent scores for the economy (92%), social (90%) and environmental (88%) dimensions, as seen in Figure 2.



**Figure 2. The scores for the components of sustainability allocated to one of the dimensions of sustainable development, giving a score for the three dimensions.**

### ‘Concern versus action’ questions

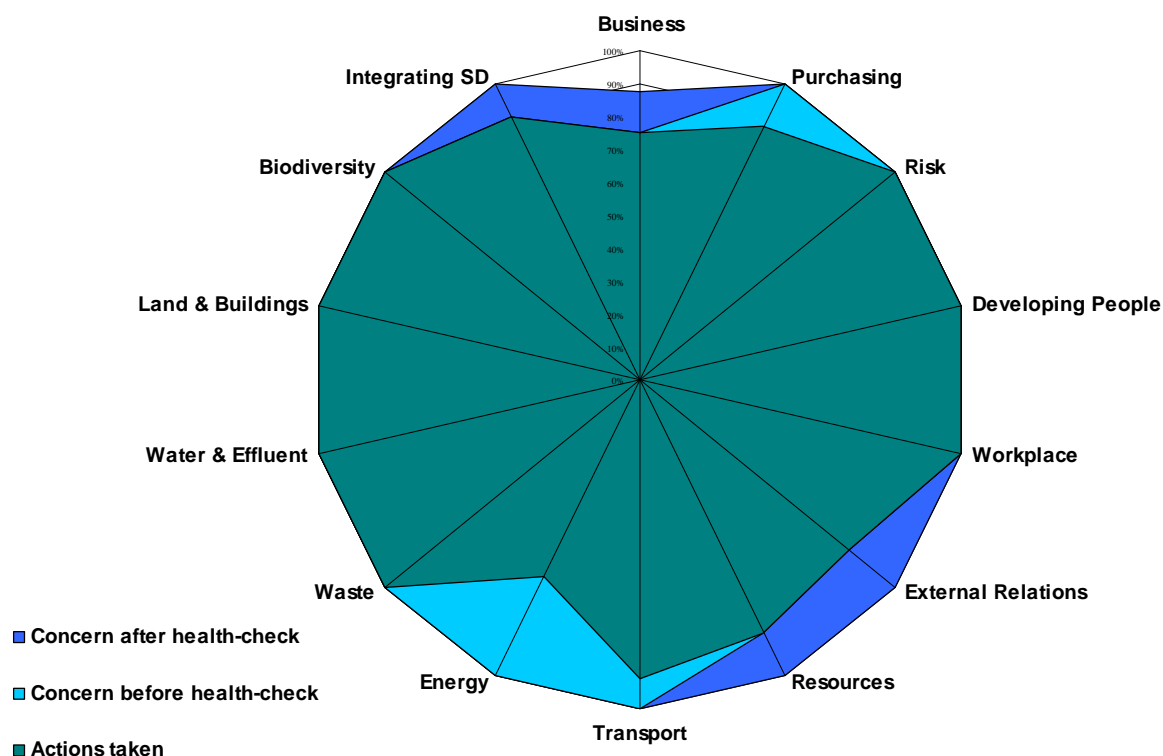
The first part of the health-check, for each component, was the ‘concern versus action’ section. A series of issues relating to each component were raised, and the company invited to respond to them. The responses were recorded as a choice between five different options, and these are listed in Table 1 below. The goal of this section is to establish the company’s level of awareness of issues relating to each component, and to explore the extent to which the company’s aspirations/ concerns have been matched by actions taken.

**Table 1. Possible answers to ‘concern versus action’ questions**

Option	Meaning
1	The issue is not applicable to my company
2	I haven’t taken any action with regard to this issue, and I am not concerned about it
3	I haven’t considered the issue before, but it might be something I should be considering
4	I <i>have</i> considered the issue before, but haven’t yet done anything about it
5	I have thought about this issue before, and taken action

In this case, the company has taken some action on **89%** of the applicable issues covered by questions in the health-check (89 out of a 100 issues). There was one issue that was not of concern (Option 2), five issues of concern were identified that had not been previously considered (Option 3), and five issues were of concern previously, to be acted upon in the future (Option 4). These results are presented in more detail in the ‘Components in detail’ section.

In order to breakdown these results for each component, and present the results in an intuitive form, a radar diagram has been created. The diagram makes use of three 'areas' of different colour - a green area, which represents the extent to which the company has taken action on the issues raised; a light blue area, which shows the extent of the company's concern about the issues before the health-check; and a dark blue area, which shows the extent of concern after the health-check. (It may be that only two, or even one, colour is visible in the diagram, depending on the responses given). For a detailed description of how to interpret this diagram, please refer to Appendix A3. The result for The Soap Shed is shown in Figure 3 below:



**Figure 3. A comparison of concern (including concerns before and after health-check) and action taken for each component of sustainability**

The ideal is to achieve high scores for actions and concerns in all components, which would give a symmetrical diagram with the green (action) area covering all components. It can be seen that in this case the diagram is symmetrical, and all three 'areas' are large. This demonstrates that The Soap Shed has excellent overall awareness and concern across the issues covered in the health-check, with action taken for the vast majority. Action had been taken for all issues raised and deemed relevant in the 'Biodiversity', 'Land and Buildings', 'Water and Effluent', 'Waste', 'Workplace', 'Developing People' and 'Risk Management' components. Previously considered issues which have not yet been acted upon were found in the 'Purchasing', 'Transport' and 'Energy' components. New concerns were shown in 'Resources', 'External Relations', 'Economics and Business' and 'Integrating SD'.

## Trends in performance

The second set of questions addressed performance and, as above, five options were presented. For each component, the company had to decide which option most accurately describes their performance in relation to one or two indicators, over the last year (five years for biodiversity). Table 2 shows the key to the possible answers and Table 3 shows the results.

**Table 2. Key to performance trends.**

Key to performance trends	
Definite improvement	☺☺
Probable improvement	☺
No change	☹
Probable decline	☹
Definite decline	☹☹
Component not applicable	●

**Table 3. Performance indicators used in the health-check – an indication of trends.**

Indicator	Change in performance
Business activity	☹
Business profitability	☺☺
Influence of environmental and ethical issues on purchasing decisions	☺
Ability to cope with risk	☺☺
Number of opportunities to develop skills	☺☺
Percentage of staff/service users influencing decisions	☹
Working conditions	☺☺
Salaries	☺☺
Customer/stakeholder satisfaction	☹
Number of working partnerships	☺☺
Resource consumption *	☹☹
Efficiency of use of natural resources	☺☺
Performance on transport	☺☺
Energy consumption *	☺☺
CO2 emissions *	☺☺
Atmospheric emissions *	●
Volume of waste produced *	☹
Proportion of waste reused/recycled	☺☺
Water usage *	☺☺
Emissions to water *	☹
Condition of landscape or buildings	☹
Impact on biodiversity (over 5 years)	☹
Incorporating sustainability into business practices	☺☺
Impact on quality of life	☺☺
* improvement in performance is shown by a reduction in the quantities of the indicator	

Improvements in performance definitely took place in fourteen indicators, a probable improvement in two, and no change in five. There was one indicator with a probable decline in performance, one definite decline and one non-applicable indicator. These, or other indicators more appropriate to the company's circumstances, can be quantified and monitored over time to provide a sound basis for measuring and reporting social, economic and environmental progress.

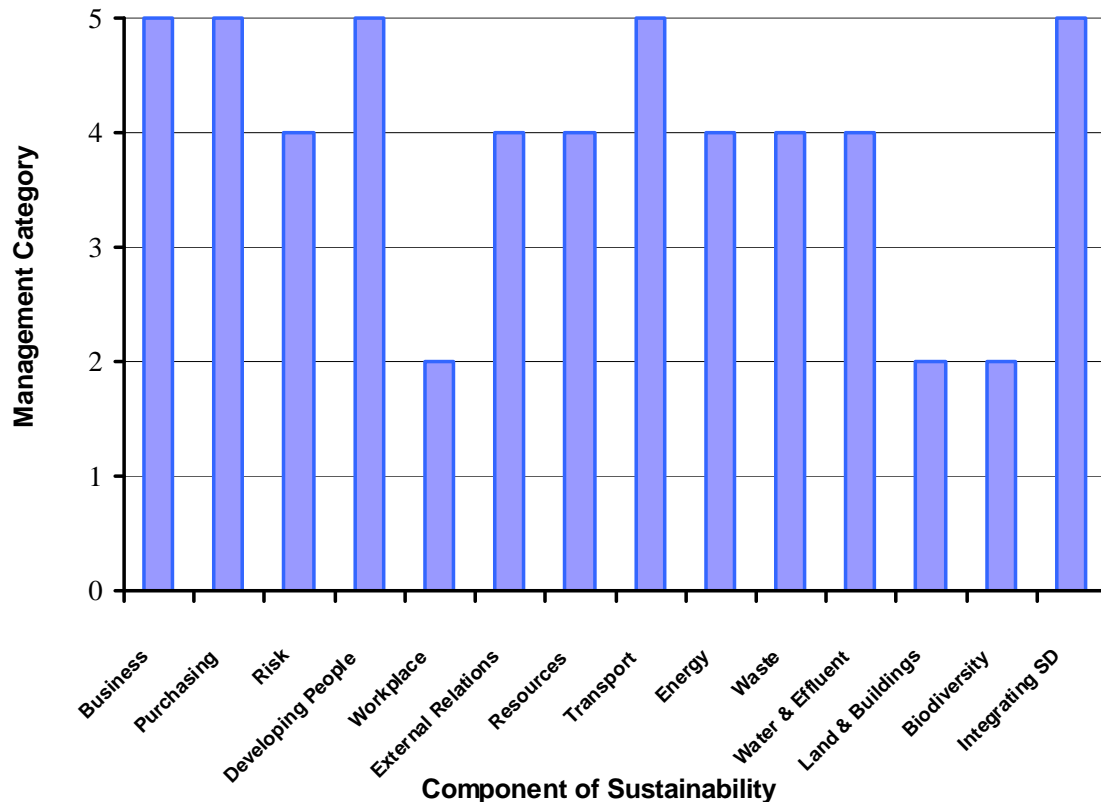
## Management questions

The third type of question, for each component, addressed management systems. Again, five options were presented and the company was asked to decide which one, in relation to the component under question, is the closest match to the management system currently employed. The options are presented in Table 4 below.

**Table 4. Key to management categories**

Management category	Description of management system used by your company
1	No procedures or consideration of the issue
2	Informal practices, verbal or written statements, limited actions
3	Documented procedures or reviews
4	Formal management system with objectives and targets
5	Formal management system with a programme of continual improvement, incorporation of best practice, and accreditation where appropriate

The results are shown in Figure 4.



**Figure 4. Comparison of the management practices for each component of sustainability**

All applicable components had received prior consideration as a management issue, but three components were managed only through informal practices, verbal or written statements and limited actions (option 2). There were six components with a formal management system with objectives and targets (option 4), and five had formal management systems with a programme of continual improvement, incorporation of best practice, and accreditation where appropriate (option 5). Overall scores for each component (below 5) could be increased through documenting and implementing formal management procedures (including setting objectives and targets) and aiming for continual improvement and the incorporation of best practice, with accreditation where appropriate. The Green Dragon<sup>®</sup> standard has probably helped the organisation formalise management of some, but not all environmental components.

## Conclusion

The results show that the company has given much consideration to, and acted upon, a great number of environmental, economic and social issues. Management levels are generally very high, and performance is improving for most components. There are many excellent component scores (including one 99% score), and all three dimension scores are excellent. Despite the company's current strength, there remains some scope for further consideration and action, particularly with regard to some environmental components.



## Components in Detail



This section provides detailed feedback on your answers for each component. By reporting on how all 'action and concern' questions were answered, it is hoped that this section may form the basis for further consideration and action on the issues involved. It is designed to complement the 'Advice on developing a sustainability vision, policy and action plan' section.

### Economy

#### Economics and business

The overall score for this component is 85%.

It is believed that business activity (e.g. the number of customers/ turnover) has not changed over the last year, but that business profitability has definitely improved.

The management system with regard to this component is best described as a formal management system with a programme of continual improvement and incorporation of best practice, with accreditation if appropriate.

The following issues had received prior consideration leading to action being taken:

- *Having sound business practices (e.g. up-to-date balance sheet, prompt payment of invoices)*
- *Investing in new equipment or technologies*
- *Investing in research and development*
- *Being open to innovation regarding business development (e.g. competitor's initiatives or employees developing new working practices).*
- *Actively seeking new financial opportunities (e.g. new business partners)*
- *Attempting to foresee changes to consumer trends / expectations*

The company had not previously considered the following issue but may take action in the future:

- *Producing a long-term business plan*

The company did not intend taking action with regard to the following issue:

- *Operating to other standards (e.g. ISO 9000 or any other UK, European or International standards, or industry required/bespoke standards)*

The directors feel that the business has found its optimum output, and that exceeding it would both increase the unit price, due to moving onto a higher tax bracket, and change the nature of the business in an undesirable way. Their main goal therefore is to continue to be an innovator in their field and provide products which are more sustainable than those of their competitors.

## Purchasing

The overall score for this component is 94%.

It is believed that the influence of ethical and environmental considerations on purchasing policies and procedures has probably increased over the last year.

The management system with regard to this component is best described as a formal management system with a programme of continual improvement and incorporation of best practice, with accreditation if appropriate.

The following issues had received prior consideration leading to action being taken:

- *Reducing the environmental impact of sourcing materials, goods & services (e.g. alternatives to limited resources, FSC certification)*
- *Purchasing goods & services locally*
- *Purchasing locally produced goods & services*
- *Ensuring that operations do not have an adverse social impact (e.g. checking credentials of overseas suppliers)*
- *Considering the ethical and environmental policies and practices of suppliers*
- *Attempting to influence the behaviour of suppliers through use of purchasing power*

The following was an issue of concern, but action had not yet been taken:

- *Consideration of ethical (human rights, labour, and corruption) and environmental impacts in incoming and outgoing investment decisions, including banking accounts and pension plans*

Careful examination of where their ingredients come from, and the impacts they have, has always been important to the company. The use of local ingredients, such as seaweed and honey, are a large part of the products' appeal to customers. However, choice is not always available, and their ability to influence larger suppliers, through purchasing power, is limited.

## Risk management

The overall score for this component is 97%.

It is believed that the organisations ability to cope with risk has definitely improved over the last year.

The management system with regard to this component is best described as a formal management system with objectives and targets.

The following issues had received prior consideration leading to action being taken:

- *Taking adequate insurance cover*
- *Being proactive in your approach to health and safety, fire safety and equal access for all*
- *Keeping up-to-date with current and pending legislation (e.g. water, carbon, IPPC etc)*
- *Developing procedures to deal with emergency situations e.g. scandal, oil spill*
- *Consideration of the effects that an environmental incident or prosecution (of yourselves or suppliers) might have on providing services*
- *Identification of financial risks e.g. a hike in interest rates, imposed legislation, oil price increase*
- *Identification and mitigation of all other risks on an ongoing basis*

There were also two issues in this component which were not applicable at the time of the health-check.

This component achieved a very high score, due to a formal management system, improving performance, and action has been taken with respect to all applicable issues. The business is fortunate to be small enough to be highly adaptable should the need for change arise.

# Society

## Developing people

The overall score for this component is 99%.

It is believed that the number of opportunities to develop skills has definitely improved over the last year, but that the number of staff/service users contributing towards the business' decision making has not changed.

The management system with regard to this component is best described as a formal management system with a programme of continual improvement and incorporation of best practice, with accreditation if appropriate.

The following issues had received prior consideration leading to action being taken:

- *Assessment of training needs*
- *Developing guidance, support or mentoring programmes*
- *Ensuring provision for staff training, career development or work experience (e.g. secondments)*
- *Developing training links within industry and educational institutions*
- *Offering apprenticeship placements*
- *Encouraging a working ethos of 'pitching in/ going the extra mile'*

There were also six issues in this component which were not applicable at the time of the health-check.

This was the component which received the highest score. A significant number of questions were not applicable due to the fact that the company has no employees, but the directors are proactive in ensuring that their own training needs are met, have trained a family member to the point where they can set up a similar company in Australia. They are also educating the public about natural soap making through their presence at events and festivals.

## The workplace

The overall score for this component is 82%.

It is believed that working conditions have definitely improved over the last year, and that wages have also improved in relation to the cost of living.

The management system with regard to this component is best described as having informal practices, verbal or written statements, with limited actions taken.

The following issues had received prior consideration leading to action being taken:

- *Allowing flexi-time*
- *Responding effectively to requests regarding working conditions*
- *Rewarding staff for good performance*

There were also ten issues in this component which were not applicable at the time of the health-check.

The fact that the company has no employees, other than the directors, means that many questions were not applicable, and is reflected by the informal management system. However, it is important to note that the company, and its location, provides the directors with good quality of life and sense of satisfaction.

## External relations

The overall score for this component is 89%.

It is believed that the customer/stakeholder satisfaction has not changed over the last year, but the number of working partnerships has definitely improved.

The management system with regard to this component is best described as a formal management system with objectives and targets.

The following issues had received prior consideration leading to action being taken:

- *Supporting and encouraging cultural activities and events (e.g. the arts, music etc)*

- *Donation of resources to other organisations and individuals (e.g. money, time, land or goods)*
- *Exchanging good practice examples with other organisations*
- *Active pursuit of opportunities for working in partnership with e.g. other businesses, community & voluntary groups, civil society organisations or public services*
- *Consideration of ethical and environmental policies and practices of partner organisations when selecting them*
- *Awareness of all parties concerned with local issues (e.g. neighbours, local groups, community councils, etc)*
- *Awareness of any impacts the business' operations may have on the community and quality of life, both positive and negative*
- *Development of community consultation procedures (e.g. complaints procedure)*
- *Provision of goods or services in both English and Welsh (e.g. telephone, website, labelling)*

The company had not previously considered the following issues but may take action in the future:

- *Provision of information in a manner that is accessible to all*
- *Encouragement of positive interactions with the local community (e.g. open days or school visits)*

There were also two issues in this component which were not applicable at the time of the health-check.

Being local is central to the business' model, and through its presence at farmers markets and various meetings The Soap Shed maintains quite a high profile in the area. The community welcomed the company's move to Rosebush, as it added to the village's diversity and helps keep it a living community. In their efforts to educate people about the benefits of natural soap making, the directors travelled to Morocco to teach locals there how to make soap with natural ingredients available to them.

## Environment

### Resource management

The overall score for this component is 89%.

It is believed that performance with regard to natural resources consumption has definitely declined (i.e. more have been consumed) over the last year, but that the efficiency with which they have been consumed has definitely improved.

The management system with regard to this component is best described as a formal management system with objectives and targets.

The following issues had received prior consideration leading to action being taken:

- *Design-efficiency for goods, packaging and promotional materials*
- *Reducing dependency on paper by e.g. monitoring, re-using/ recycling, double-sided printing etc*
- *Implementation of methods of minimising use of raw materials and resources*
- *Use of recycled or re-useable materials whenever possible*
- *Participation in a waste exchange scheme*
- *Avoiding use of environmentally sensitive materials (e.g. uncertified wood, ozone-depleting substances etc)*

The company had not previously considered the following issue but may take action in the future:

- *Conducting research on raw material use, production processes, emissions and wastes associated with operations e.g. Life Cycle Analysis*

The company is very careful about minimising its use of natural resources, although an increased output over the last few years has inevitably lead to an increase in the resources consumed. An example of good practice is that the directors collect shoeboxes from local shops and use the cardboard for their own packaging.

## Transport

The overall score for this component is 97%.

It is believed that performance as regard to transport has definitely improved over the last year.

The management system with regard to this component is best described as a formal management system with a programme of continual improvement and incorporation of best practice, with accreditation if appropriate.

The following issues had received prior consideration leading to action being taken:

- *Consideration of the impact of the business' transport activities on climate change*
- *Minimisation of business mileage*
- *Use of home working practices where possible*
- *Encouraging car-sharing for business use*
- *Carrying out route planning*
- *Investing in modern fuel-efficient vehicles*
- *Ensuring that vehicles are serviced regularly*
- *Encouraging responsible driving practices to optimise fuel efficiency*
- *Choosing the most sustainable mode of transport for freight distribution*
- *Optimisation of goods/ freight for outward and return journeys (e.g. efficient packing)*

The following was an issue of concern, but action had not yet been taken:

- *Conversion of vehicles to use less polluting fuels (e.g. LPG, sustainably sourced biofuels)*

There were also five issues in this component which were not applicable at the time of the health-check.

This is one of the highest scoring components. The company's transport impacts are smaller now than they used to be as it has a presence at a smaller number of bigger events, and also the directors no longer need to go out looking for retail outlets for their products.

## Energy use & efficiency

The overall score for this component is 85%.

It is believed that performance with regard to energy consumption has definitely improved (i.e. less was consumed) over the last year, and that your contribution to climate change has also definitely improved.

The management system with regard to this component is best described as a formal management system with objectives and targets.

The following issues had received prior consideration leading to action being taken:

- *Giving one person responsibility for monitoring and reporting on energy*
- *Ensuring staff are informed/ trained about energy and climate change issues*
- *Ensuring all no or low cost methods are in use for managing and reducing energy demands (e.g. switching off equipment at night)*
- *Seeking to conserve energy (insulation/ double glazing etc)*
- *Choosing energy efficient equipment*
- *Assessing the costs and resultant savings of energy reduction measures in buildings, equipment and processes*

The following were issues of concern, but action had not yet been taken:

- *Purchasing energy through a 'Green tariff'*
- *Making use of alternative energy sources e.g. solar panels*
- *Taking steps to offset CO2 emissions through e.g. donations to climate care organisations or tree planting*

Energy consumption is kept low by the fact that aspects of the soap making process are done by hand, and that a cold process is used. Although the directors are interested in issues such as offsetting and green tariffs, their primary concern is minimising consumption.

## Air quality

During the health-check, it was agreed that this component was not currently applicable to the company.

## Waste management

The overall score for this component is 96%.

It is believed that performance with regard to the volume of waste produced has not changed over the last year, and that the proportion reused or recycled has definitely improved.

The management system with regard to this component is best described as a formal management system with objectives and targets.

The following issues had received prior consideration leading to action being taken:

- *Giving one person responsibility for monitoring and reporting on waste issues*
- *Regular reviewing of waste management*
- *Implementation of measures to re-use and/ or recover waste*
- *Segregation of waste to facilitate reuse/ recovery*
- *Considering end-of-use disposal of products (e.g. ensuring they're recyclable)*
- *Collaboration with other organisations on waste reduction measures (e.g. local authorities, businesses, voluntary sector, advisory services)*
- *Informing/ training staff about waste management issues*

There was also one issue in this component which was not applicable at the time of the health-check.

Another excellent score was awarded for this component. Examples of good practice are that they offer their products unboxed, and that all packaging is biodegradable. Although output has increased in recent years, this has been compensated for with increased efficiency so that the total amount of waste produced has not changed significantly.

## Water and effluent

The overall score for this component is 93%.

It is believed that performance with regard to water usage has definitely improved over the last year (i.e. less was consumed), and that emissions to water have probably declined (i.e. more effluent was released).

The management system with regard to this component is best described as a formal management system with objectives and targets.

The following issues had received prior consideration leading to action being taken:

- *Monitoring water, effluent and associated costs*
- *Using water wisely (e.g. automatic valves on taps, water-saving cisterns)*
- *Harvesting of rain or grey water*
- *Attempting to minimise impacts on water quality from mains supply (e.g. through choosing 'green' cleaning products and/ or process chemicals)*
- *Informing/ training staff about water efficiency issues*

There were also three issues in this component which were not applicable at the time of the health-check.

The amount of water consumed has decreased as the company now uses a higher proportion of harvested rainwater. Effluent release is minimal and the waste water produced is clean enough to be released directly, thanks to the process' efficiency.

## Land use management

The overall score for this component is 75%.

It is believed that the condition of the landscape and buildings for which you are responsible has probably improved over the last year.

The management system with regard to this component is best described as having informal practices, verbal or written statements, with limited actions taken.

The following issues had received prior consideration leading to action being taken:

- *Making use of sustainable materials for maintenance or building works*
- *Consideration of alternative land management techniques*
- *Controlling soil nutrient status*
- *Considering amenity value and the possibility of multiple uses for land where appropriate*
- *Assessing how the long term productivity or value of land might be affected by current practice on that land*

There were also thirteen issues in this component which were not applicable at the time of the health-check.

This component did not achieve quite so high a score, mainly due to the informal management system, but this is understandable given the nature of the site and the score remains very high. The business is very suitable for its location in the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park as it has very little impact on the local environment but is helping to secure the economic health of the area. The cottage looks no different to those around it, and there are no signs on the outside, or in the living area, that it contains a manufacturing plant. Access to the site is not great, but this is largely irrelevant as there is no need for customers to visit the cottage.

## Biodiversity

The overall score for this component is 80%.

It is believed that your impact on biodiversity has not changed over the last five years.

The management system with regard to this component is best described as having informal practices, verbal or written statements, with limited actions taken.

The following issues had received prior consideration leading to action being taken:

- *Incorporating 'wildlife friendly' design features in new developments (e.g. preserving and improving hedgerows)*
- *Managing and reducing use of substances such as pesticides and fertilisers*
- *Making and maintaining contact with conservation groups*
- *Attempting to improve biodiversity through habitat improvement/ restoration/ creation schemes or impact mitigation*
- *Contributing to local initiatives (e.g. Local Biodiversity Action Plan)*

There were also two issues in this component which were not applicable at the time of the health-check.

This section only applies to the cottage's garden, but this is very wildlife friendly and has a very active bird table.

## Integrating sustainable development

The overall score for this component is 96%.

It is believed that the incorporation of sustainability into business practices has definitely improved over the last year, and that your impact on quality of life has also definitely improved.

The management system with regard to this component is best described as a formal management system with a programme of continual improvement and incorporation of best practice, with accreditation if appropriate.

The following issues had received prior consideration leading to action being taken:

- *Consideration of sustainability (social, environmental, financial, and the integration of all three aspects) in the business development process*
- *Reviewing management systems regularly, with consideration of all three dimensions of sustainability*
- *Discussing of sustainability issues at all levels in the organisation, on an ongoing basis*
- *To consider the health impacts of products/services*

- *Providing customers with sustainability advice or information (for example, on labelling) with products and services*
- *Participating in sustainability initiatives or with local groups*
- *Developing a vision and strategy regarding the company's contribution to sustainable development*
- *Maintaining a long-term perspective on operations (taking account the needs of future generations as well as our own)*

The company had not previously considered the following issue but may take action in the future:

- *Communicating information on sustainability performance, both internally and externally, on a regular basis e.g. sustainability reports*

There was also one issue in this component which was not applicable at the time of the health-check.

The company has had a positive impact on the quality of life of its directors, but also for many customers, particularly those with skin conditions which respond well to only using soap with gentle, natural ingredients. The integration of sustainable development into day to day activities has always been very important to the company.

## Conclusion

In the present climate, it makes good business sense to incorporate sustainable development thinking into your day-to-day business and operations. Customers, employees and share-holders are becoming more demanding in relation to environmental and social issues and it is important that a company can respond to these demands in a knowledgeable and demonstrable way.

The results of this health-check show that The Soap Shed is very proactive in its approach to all three dimensions that must be balanced for sustainable development. The directors have an excellent and improving awareness of the issues, with action already taken on 89% of the “concern and action” issues covered in the health-check. There exists an ethos of continual improvement, and this provided motivation to undertake the the *Synnwyr Busnes – Business Sense* health-check, in order to find ways of doing more, in addition to gaining acknowledgement of their efforts to date. The next section of this report provides general principles for the development of a sustainability policy and action plan, and this is followed by a list of organisations and websites which may be able to aid with this process.

The *Synnwyr Busnes – Business Sense* team would like to thank you for working with us and making a positive contribution to sustainable development in Wales. We trust that this health-check report will help you become even more aware of the issues involved and will help you to integrate sustainable development into both your work and daily lives.



## Key points for developing a sustainability strategy, policy and action plan

### ECONOMY

#### ***Economics and business***

- For quality of life, economic well-being should be balanced with social progress and environmental protection. Develop a long term business plan that includes financial, social, environmental and ethical aims.
- Report your progress in sustainability. Annual “Triple-bottom line” reporting on your progress in environmental and social issues in addition to the financial accounts may bring benefits. It can demonstrate to your customers, employees and shareholders an effective management that is forward thinking, innovative and looking to continual improvement.
- Consider operating to standards such as ISO 9000 Quality Management Standard or the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) Excellence Model.
- Consider the ethical (human rights, labour and corruption) and environmental impacts of all your incoming and outgoing investment decisions. Chose “ethical” banking accounts and/or pension plans. Since July 2000 all company pension schemes in the UK have been forced to amend their Statement of Investment Principles (SIP) to declare their ethical (social, environmental or ethical considerations) policy or state if these are considered at all.
- Invest in economic, social and environmental capital, and set aside resources and time for research and development. Look at what you are already doing and consider ways of continual improvement. This could be in terms of your resource efficiency, giving better customer service or improving the value of your brand etc.
- Make contact with other business service providers, e.g. Business Eye, for information on services and grants for improving your business performance in areas such as marketing, information technology, e-commerce etc. Many services can be provided free or subsidised in the Objective One areas of Wales.

#### ***Resourcing***

- Buy ethically traded and environmentally-friendly goods and services that are produced in a sustainable way, and support your local economy through local purchasing and employing locally whenever possible.
- Think about what you consume. Try to invest in quality items that last longer, purchase items that will produce less waste, and by re-used or recycled items.

- Try to find out where all the materials you use come from. Do they have any negative impacts on the environment or on the people that produce them? If so are there any alternatives?
- Convert your organisation to a Fair Trade workplace. Go to [www.fairtrade.org.uk](http://www.fairtrade.org.uk) for more information.
- Try talking to your suppliers – are they aware of sustainability issues? Ask them what actions are they taking, and try to use your purchasing power to influence them. Suggest that they carry out a *Synnwyr Busnes – Business Sense* health-check.

### **Risk Management**

- Think in the broadest possible terms about your financial and operational risks, and considering the effects of an incident in your supply chain.
- Keep up-to-date with current and future legislation (e.g. water, energy, Pollution Prevention and Control [PPC]). Arena may be able to help you with this information.
- Review insurance requirements to ensure that the company has adequate provision for all eventualities.
- Formally documenting your procedures which could help in any future emergency situations

## **SOCIAL**

### **Developing people**

- Recognise our culturally diverse society and encourage the use of Welsh language.
- If your staff members are already involved in activities such as recycling, buying fair trade goods, using energy efficiently or doing work in the community etc, in their free time, encourage them to consider these actions at work. It is important to acknowledge people's efforts and doing so could be excellent for team-building and developing a sustainable working ethos in the company.

### **External relations**

- Involve local people in operations that affect them.
- Try to ensure continual improvement and best practice. Look for opportunities to develop new ways of working, such as through developing a formal approach to measuring customer satisfaction.

### **Workplace**

- Employees should be fairly paid and facilitated to develop their potential through training.
- Provide good working conditions, and consider introducing flexible working practices wherever possible.

## **ENVIRONMENT**

### **Transport**

- Any negative environmental and social impact of transporting goods and people should be minimised.
- Proactively monitor the situation with regards to 'greener' fuel, and consider converting vehicles to use less polluting fuels (e.g. LPG, sustainably sourced biofuels) when this becomes a viable option. This could be an opportunity to become a leading organisation in this respect.
- Look into the tax benefits (Enhanced Capital Allowances) of purchasing low carbon emission cars – see [www.eca.gov.uk](http://www.eca.gov.uk).
- Investigate options for offsetting carbon emissions from transport activities – see e.g. [www.targetneutral.com](http://www.targetneutral.com) for more information.

### **Energy**

- Energy should be conserved through purchasing energy efficient equipment and minimising demand, through e.g. switching off equipment when not in use.
- Look into the tax benefits (Enhanced Capital Allowances) of purchasing energy efficient equipment – see [www.eca.gov.uk](http://www.eca.gov.uk).

- Consider sourcing energy from renewable sources – either through producing your own renewable energy e.g. from a wood-fired boiler, or by simply choosing a ‘green’ tariff – see information in the ‘resources’ section.
- Consider whether you can inspire your customers and/ or staff to save energy.

#### **Air quality**

- All emissions to air (greenhouse gases and pollutants) should be kept to a minimum through e.g. ensuring boilers are serviced regularly.
- When relevant, consider using low-emission heating equipment in refurbishment – see the Low Carbon Buildings Programme for grant funding, accredited installers and product information.

#### **Waste**

- Waste should be reduced, re-used or recycled.
- Sources of pollution controlled and minimised.

#### **Water**

- Water should be conserved and water quality ensured by minimising pollution.
- Look into the tax benefits (Enhanced Capital Allowances) of purchasing water saving equipment – see [www.eca.gov.uk](http://www.eca.gov.uk)

#### **Land & Buildings**

- Buildings should be in keeping with the environment and community and be constructed and maintained in a sustainable way.

#### **Biodiversity**

- Biodiversity should be encouraged, maintained and enhanced. Develop a simple action plan for encouraging wildlife e.g. through incorporating wildlife friendly features.

## **INTEGRATING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

- Develop a strategy to integrate a balanced and holistic view of the environment, community and economy in everything you do, to ensure a good quality of life now and for the future.
- This health-check can be used to identify important issues for each component as a starting point in developing a sustainability vision, policy and action plan.
- Review your performance and targets regularly. Work towards continual improvement by measuring performance in all components, using appropriate indicators to measure changes. For example as a measure of energy use, the number of kilowatt hours, or for the workplace the number of sick days. Targets for these indicators should be “SMART” - Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and within a Timescale.
- Review management systems regularly. Set and implement standards for the way the company’s core business operations are carried out by introducing more formal procedures or management systems. Have policies for each component that describe the issue and state your aims for improvement.
- Tell people about your moves towards sustainability and use them for marketing purposes. Using this kind of information will set you apart from your competitors and may help ensure your long-term sustainability. Provide customers with sustainability advice or information (e.g. labelling) with your service
- Share your experiences with other organisations and make use of examples of best practice. Get involved with any local sustainability initiatives or groups, and attend awareness training workshops.





## Resources

This section contains a list of organisations and websites which you may find useful in your drive towards greater sustainability for your organisation. Please note that the resources listed here are for information purposes only and have not been endorsed by the *Synnwyr Busnes – Business Sense* service.

### Accessibility

- **Hidden Differences.** Media and communications compliance with Disability Acts 1995/2005 [www.hiddendifferences.com](http://www.hiddendifferences.com)
- **British Standards Organisation.** Compliance with Disability Acts 1995/2005 guidance [www.bsi-global.com/ICT/PAS78/index.xalter](http://www.bsi-global.com/ICT/PAS78/index.xalter)
- **Web Accessibility Initiative.** Website content accessibility guidelines [www.w3.org/WAI/intro/wcag.php#is](http://www.w3.org/WAI/intro/wcag.php#is)
- **Disability Rights Commission.** Website Accessibility - <http://www.drc.org.uk/default.aspx?page=3364>

### Air Emissions

- **The Carbon Trust.** UK government and business body set up to help in the move toward a low carbon economy. Advice and help for public bodies and businesses in energy efficiency, reducing carbon emissions and compliance. [www.thecarbontrust.co.uk](http://www.thecarbontrust.co.uk)

### Biodiversity

- Resources for businesses with an interest in biodiversity. [www.businessandbiodiversity.org](http://www.businessandbiodiversity.org)
- **ARENA Network** in collaboration with the Countryside Council for Wales run *Business and Biodiversity* workshops – [www.arenanetwork.org](http://www.arenanetwork.org) or contact your local ARENA Network Business Environment Co-ordinator for more information
- **Wales Biodiversity Partnership** Information and events in Wales. [www.bioamrywiaethcymru.org.uk](http://www.bioamrywiaethcymru.org.uk)

## Business Support and Funding Providers

- **Business Eye.** The initial entry point for impartial information for business planning, operation and growth etc. including signposting and diagnostic reviews for businesses in Wales. Tel. 08457 96 97 98. [www.businesseye.org.uk](http://www.businesseye.org.uk)
- **Welsh Assembly Government Department of Innovation and Enterprise** Business support providers (replacing the Wales Development Agency) <http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/businessandconomy/help/?lang=en>
- **European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM®)** is a not-for-profit foundation that is a primary source for organisations looking to excel in their market and in their business. EFQM Excellence Model [www.efqm.org](http://www.efqm.org) (In Wales see Wales Quality Centre for more information).
- **Wales Co-operative Centre Business Succession Service** can support businesses to ensure their survival through an employee buy-out by transferring ownership of a company to its workforce. <http://www.walescoop.com/site/template.asp?PID=1&SID=24&IID=1>
- **Wales Management Council.** Support, development and best practice for business managers in Wales. [www.walesmanagementcouncil.org.uk](http://www.walesmanagementcouncil.org.uk)
- **TROSI.** A European-funded business service that can provide support for developing new ideas and services for individuals and organisations in Objective One areas of Wales. [www.menterabusnes.com/english/5/38/trosi.html](http://www.menterabusnes.com/english/5/38/trosi.html)

## Building and Construction

- **National Green Specification (NGS)** is an independent organisation set up to produce an internet based resource for designers, constructors and manufacturers involved with 'Sustainable Construction'. NGS Green Spec website is all about helping you to understand what good practice is and providing you with the resources to achieve it. [www.greenspec.co.uk](http://www.greenspec.co.uk)
- **Building Research Establishment.** For information concerning buildings, including energy efficiency and the use of renewable/recycled materials. The BRE Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) can be used to assess the environmental impact of buildings. Web: [www.bre.co.uk](http://www.bre.co.uk)
- **Association of Environment Conscious Building** is an independent membership organization that aims to facilitate environmentally responsible practices within building. [www.aecb.net](http://www.aecb.net)
- **SalvoMIE Materials Information Exchange** [www.salvomie.co.uk](http://www.salvomie.co.uk) resources for the construction industry to buy and sell used secondhand and unused materials over the internet. Information and links on Sustainable Construction.
- **Green Register of Construction Professionals.** A list of construction professionals committed to sustainable practices [www.greenregister.org](http://www.greenregister.org)
- **Energy Savings Trust.** Information for house-building professionals. <http://www.est.org.uk/housingbuildings/professionals/>
- **Against the Grain - Crest Co-operative Ltd,** Llandudno Junction. Recycled timber <http://www.crest-cooperative.org.uk/english/grain.htm>

## Climate Change

- **Offsetting carbon emissions.** From energy use and transport. See [www.climatecare.org](http://www.climatecare.org) or [www.targetneutral.com](http://www.targetneutral.com) for more information.
- **Calculate CO<sub>2</sub> emissions for your business.** <http://www.climatecare.org/business/tellmemore/>
- **Calculate CO<sub>2</sub> emissions for you or your household.** <http://actonco2.direct.gov.uk/index.html>

## Communications

- **Solutions for video and audio conferencing**, communications and data sharing. See [www.conferencing.bt.com](http://www.conferencing.bt.com) for more information.

## Consumption

- **Wales Consumer Council**. Where to find... links to sustainable living information. [www.sus-life.org.uk](http://www.sus-life.org.uk)

## Corporate Social Responsibility

- **UN Global Compact** Corporate social responsibility initiative based on ten universal principles on human rights, labour conditions, environment and anti-corruption. Companies with more than ten employees encouraged to sign-up [www.unglobalcompact.org](http://www.unglobalcompact.org) see also [www.one-report.com](http://www.one-report.com)

## Design and Innovation

- **Design Wales**. Design Wales provides a range of product and brand design services. Tel. 0845 303 1400. Web: [www.designwales.org.uk](http://www.designwales.org.uk)

## Employment

- **Investors in People**. Investors in People is a national quality standard for improving an organisation's performance through setting out levels of good practice for training and development of people to achieve business goals. Investors in People Information Line Tel. 020 7467 1946, [www.iipuk.co.uk](http://www.iipuk.co.uk)
- **International Labour Organisation (ILO)**. The UN agency which seeks the promotion of social justice, particularly relating to employment issues. Web: [www.ilo.org](http://www.ilo.org)

## Energy

- **Green energy from the grid**. Supplier information for 'green' tariffs. [www.greenelectricity.org](http://www.greenelectricity.org)
- **Wood energy**. Support for homeowners and businesses interested in using woodfuel in Wales [www.woodfuelwales.org.uk](http://www.woodfuelwales.org.uk)
- **Energy Savings Trust**. Promoting the sustainable use of energy. Useful source of information on house-building and transport issues [www.est.org](http://www.est.org)

The following document may be of interest for refurbishment of solid walled buildings:  
[http://www.est.org.uk/uploads/documents/housingbuildings/CE184%20-%20practical%20refurbishment%20of%20solid-walled%20houses.pdf#search=%22Practical%20refurbishment%20of%20solid-walled%20houses%20\(CE184\)%22](http://www.est.org.uk/uploads/documents/housingbuildings/CE184%20-%20practical%20refurbishment%20of%20solid-walled%20houses.pdf#search=%22Practical%20refurbishment%20of%20solid-walled%20houses%20(CE184)%22)

- **Energy Saving Wales**. Online help to find publicly funded support available in Wales for energy efficiency and small-scale renewable energy. <http://www.energysavingwales.org.uk/index.cfm>
- **Wales OPET Cymru**. Part of the EU Organisations for the Promotion of Energy Technologies (OPET) Network operated by Dulas Limited. Advice and implementation of renewable energy technologies in Wales. [www.cordis.lu/opet/src/opets/uk2.htm](http://www.cordis.lu/opet/src/opets/uk2.htm)

## Environment

- **Arena Network**. One of the key environmental support bodies in Wales offering a wide variety of advice and hands-on support for business. [www.arenanetwork.org](http://www.arenanetwork.org)

- **Envirowise.** The UK environmental support programme for industry. Provides free advice, site visits and publications covering many sectors and topics, focusing on waste minimisation, cleaner technology and design. The Environment and Energy Helpline offers access to a wide range of experts. Tel. 0800 585794. [www.envirowise.gov.uk](http://www.envirowise.gov.uk)
- **Environment Agency Wales.** Along with the local authorities, the Environment Agency enforces environmental regulation and assists businesses with regard to pollution prevention and control matters. Tel. 02920 770088. [www.environment-agency.gov.uk/regions/wales](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/regions/wales)
- **Environment Agency NetRegs.** Online service provides a simple way of obtaining information on environmental regulation for many industry sectors. [www.environment-agency.gov.uk/netregs](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/netregs)
- **Centre for Alternative Technology.** Useful information sheets on energy, water technologies and eco-friendly methods. [http://www.cat.org.uk/information/information.tmpl?subdir=information&sku=info\\_is](http://www.cat.org.uk/information/information.tmpl?subdir=information&sku=info_is)

## Equal Opportunities

- **Business Link.** Information on equal opportunities and discrimination for businesses. [www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/layer?topicId=1073877851](http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/layer?topicId=1073877851)
- **Equal Opportunities Commission** [www.eoc.org.uk](http://www.eoc.org.uk)

## Ethical Trading and Investment

- **Ethical Trading Initiative.** The ETI is an alliance of companies, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and trade union organisations committed to working together to identify and promote ethical trade. [www.ethicaltrade.org](http://www.ethicaltrade.org)
- **Ethical Investment Association.** Find a specialist advisor in ethical finance and more information. [www.ethicalinvestment.org.uk](http://www.ethicalinvestment.org.uk)
- **Ethical Investors Group.** One of a number independent financial advisors that specialise in ethical investments – provide very useful information on their website. [www.ethicalinvestors.co.uk](http://www.ethicalinvestors.co.uk)
- **Ethical Banking.** See the Co-operative Bank, or its online “Smile” service [www.smile.co.uk](http://www.smile.co.uk); Triodos Bank [www.triodos.co.uk](http://www.triodos.co.uk) or the Ecology Building Society [www.ecology.co.uk](http://www.ecology.co.uk)

## Grant Funding

- **Assembly Investment Grant** – brochure: <http://new.wales.gov.uk/docrepos/40382/4038231141/40382112411/AIGbrochure.pdf?lang=en> and more information: <http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/businessandconomy/finance/investment/AIG/?lang=en>
- **Low Carbon Buildings Programme** - grant funding information <http://www.lowcarbonbuildings.org.uk/about/>
- **J4B.grants.co.uk** – online search for grants in the UK <http://www.j4bgrants.co.uk/default.aspx>

## Health and Safety

- **Workplace Health Connect** will provide free, impartial and practical advice and support on health, safety and return to work issues. Advice line 0845 609 6006. [www.workplacehealthconnect.co.uk](http://www.workplacehealthconnect.co.uk) Provided by the Health and Safety Executive.
- **Health and Safety Executive (HSE).** The UK body for health and safety regulation and advice. Tel. 08701 545500 [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)

## Human Rights

- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights [www.un.org/Overview/rights.html](http://www.un.org/Overview/rights.html)

- **International Business Leaders Forum (IBLF)** Human rights & the private sector – downloadable report <http://www.iblf.org/resources/general.jsp?id=47>

## Information Technology

- **Opportunity Wales.** Supporting the development of e-commerce in small and medium-sized businesses in [Objective One areas of Wales](#) – can carry out a free e-commerce business review. [www.opportunitywales.co.uk](http://www.opportunitywales.co.uk)

## Land Regeneration

- **Land Regeneration Network.** Platform for stakeholders involved in contaminated land and industrial waste management in Wales. [www.grc.cf.ac.uk](http://www.grc.cf.ac.uk)

## Recycling

- [www.letsrecycle.com](http://www.letsrecycle.com) Recycling and waste management resources and information on prices, legislation, materials, directory of recyclers and waste management companies.
- **Furniture Re-use Network.** Coordinating body for furniture and appliance recyclers that collect and distribute to people in need. [www.frn.org.uk](http://www.frn.org.uk)
- **Wales Environment Trust.** Information on recycling for business. [www.walesenvtrust.org.uk](http://www.walesenvtrust.org.uk)
- **Save a Cup Recycling Company.** Recycler of plastic cups and manufacturer of recycled products. Recycling plastic cups can help reduce Land-fill tax payments and help companies demonstrate compliance to new waste legislation. [www.saveacup.co.uk](http://www.saveacup.co.uk)
- **Computer recyclers and refurbishers** can be located from: <http://www.wasteonline.org.uk/resources/InformationSheets/ComputerRecyclersRefurbishers.htm>

## Research and Development

- **University Innovation Bangor.** Access to the know-how of leading researchers, scientists and graduates for research, enterprise and knowledge transfer for business and other organisations. [www.bangor.ac.uk/innovation](http://www.bangor.ac.uk/innovation)
- **Know How Wales.** This programme, run within the WDA Technology and Innovation area, facilitates the links between businesses and the universities and other academic institutions so as to facilitate R&D and technology transfer. [www.knowhowwales.com](http://www.knowhowwales.com)
- **WISE Network.** Free support for SMEs in Objective One areas to access information and advice from academics and services provided by University of Wales – Bangor, Swansea and Aberystwyth. [www.wisenetwork.org](http://www.wisenetwork.org)

## Recruitment, Education and Training

- **Sustainable Development Training.** *Synnwyr Busnes – Business Sense* can provide on or off-site training for staff tailored to the companies needs. [www.synnwyr-busnes.org](http://www.synnwyr-busnes.org)
- **Go Wales.** A subsidised initiative designed to support the recruitment and development of graduate level staff for companies in Wales. [www.gowales.co.uk](http://www.gowales.co.uk)

## Resourcing

- **Fairtrade Foundation.** The licensing body for the Fairtrade label. Useful information about Fairtrade. [www.fairtrade.org.uk](http://www.fairtrade.org.uk)

- **Oxfam GB.** The development, relief, and campaigning organisation that works with others to find lasting solutions to poverty and suffering around the world. Information on FairTrade [www.oxfam.org.uk/what\\_we\\_do/fairtrade](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/what_we_do/fairtrade)

## Social and Ethical Issues

- **Time Banks.** Organises time donations to good causes in Wales. Contact: Geoff Thomas [www.timebanks.co.uk](http://www.timebanks.co.uk)
- **Business in the Community (BiC).** Business in the Community is a unique movement for businesses committed to continually improving their positive impact on society. [www.bitc.org.uk](http://www.bitc.org.uk)
- **BRASS.** The Welsh centre for Business Relationships, Accountability, Sustainability and Society is based within Cardiff University. [www.brass.cf.ac.uk](http://www.brass.cf.ac.uk)

## Standards, Benchmarking and Reporting

- **GoodCorporation.** A global standard of corporate responsibility covering fairness to employees, suppliers, customers, financiers, the community and the environment. [www.goodcorporation.com](http://www.goodcorporation.com)
- **Global Reporting Initiative.** The GRI provides globally applicable guidelines for reporting on the economic, environmental, and social performance of companies. [www.globalreporting.org](http://www.globalreporting.org)
- **SustainAbility.** A free downloadable methodology for assessing the quality of sustainability reporting that can be used as a basis for producing a report. <http://reporting.sustainability.com/sustainability/site/page.acds?context=2180083&instanceid=2180084>
- **DEFRA.** Environmental Key Performance Indicators Reporting Guidelines for UK Business <http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/business/envrp/pdf/envkpi-guidelines.pdf>
- **Global Environmental Management Initiative.** Interactive business planning tools. [www.gemi.org](http://www.gemi.org)
- **Benchmarking Index.** Small Business Service benchmarking tool for industry sectors. [www.benchmarkindex.com](http://www.benchmarkindex.com)
- **SIGMA.** Sustainability in Practice. Integrated guidelines for sustainability management. [www.projectsigma.co.uk](http://www.projectsigma.co.uk)
- **SA8000 Social Accountability International.** A uniform, auditable standard for third party verification for social accountability. <http://www.sa-intl.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=Page.viewPage&pageId=617&parentID=473>
- **Association for Chartered Certified Accountants AccountAbility.** A membership organisation to encourage improved social performance and AA1000 social and ethical, auditing and reporting standard. [www.accountability.org.uk](http://www.accountability.org.uk)
- **Wales Quality Centre.** The centre for advice on quality management in Wales. A company can be certified as being capable of producing goods on a consistent basis, with the management system applying to the production process and also to processing of customer complaints, sources of supply, etc., and is based on a consistency of procedure. North Wales (Wrexham). Tel. 01978 293196. E-mail: [info@walesqualitycentre.org.uk](mailto:info@walesqualitycentre.org.uk) Web: [www.walesqualitycentre.org.uk](http://www.walesqualitycentre.org.uk)
- **British Standards Institute (BSI).** The source of all British technical standards and partner in many quality and environmental programmes across the UK. Tel. 0208 996 9001. Web: [www.bsi.org.uk](http://www.bsi.org.uk). Look for BS8900 sustainability management standard and guidelines.

## Sustainable Development

- **Rio Declaration on Environment and Development.** Report on the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992). 27 principles ratified by 152 countries. [www.un.org/documents/ga/conf151/aconf15126-1annex1.htm](http://www.un.org/documents/ga/conf151/aconf15126-1annex1.htm)

- **Agenda 21.** A commitment to sustainable development made at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992) by 152 countries to take a balanced and integrated approach to the environment and development. [www.un.org/esa/sustdev/documents/agenda21/english/agenda21toc.htm](http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/documents/agenda21/english/agenda21toc.htm)
- **Local Agenda 21** Promotion of sustainable development in your local area. Contact your Local Authority for further information.
- **International Institute of Sustainable Development** ([www.iisd.org](http://www.iisd.org)) Business and Sustainable Development global guide and sector-specific best practice and resources. [www.bsdglobal.com](http://www.bsdglobal.com)
- **World Business Council for Sustainable Development.** A coalition of some 140 international companies united by a shared commitment to the environment and sustainable development. [www.wbcasd.ch](http://www.wbcasd.ch)
- **Sustainable Development Commission.** The Government's independent watchdog on sustainable development. General information and history of SD. <http://www.sd-commission.org.uk/pages/sdhistory.html>
- **Cynnal Cymru.** Independent membership organisation open to individuals and organisations promoting sustainable development in Wales. [www.cynnalcymru.org](http://www.cynnalcymru.org)

## Trade Unions

- **Trade Union Congress.** Information on workers rights and training opportunities for trade union representatives. Regional website for Wales. [www.tuc.org.uk/tuc/regions\\_info\\_wales.cfm](http://www.tuc.org.uk/tuc/regions_info_wales.cfm)

## Travel and Transport

- **Environmental Transport Association.** Motoring organisation with car-buying guide, breakdown cover and information. [www.eta.co.uk](http://www.eta.co.uk)
- **Energy Savings Trust.** Useful source of information on transport issues for business. <http://www.est.org.uk/fleet/>
- **Biofuels.** Information on producing, using and converting to biodiesel. [www.vegetableoildiesel.co.uk](http://www.vegetableoildiesel.co.uk) (based in North Wales) or [www.sundancerenewables.org.uk/biodp/index.html](http://www.sundancerenewables.org.uk/biodp/index.html) (in South Wales).
- **HM Revenue and Customs.** There are tax benefits for employers that set up Green Travel Plans aimed at reducing the number of car journeys employees make to get to work. Also information on using company cars and own vehicles. [www.hmrc.gov.uk/green-transport/travel-plans.htm](http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/green-transport/travel-plans.htm)
- **Rethink, retreads.** An authoritative guide for buyers seeking best value for their fleet tyre purchases and policy makers who wish to contribute to the sustainable development of Wales. Whilst mainly focusing on large commercial vehicle (trucks, lorries, buses etc) retreads, much of the information in rethink.retreads is also relevant to smaller commercial and specialist passenger tyres. <http://www.rethinkretreads.org.uk/about.htm>
- **Sustrans.** The UK's leading sustainable transport charity. Relevant information to urban planning - Liveable Neighbourhoods and Home Zones. [www.sustrans.org.uk](http://www.sustrans.org.uk)

## Tax and Allowances

- The **Enhanced Capital Allowance Scheme** enables businesses to claim 100% first year capital allowances on investments in energy saving technologies, water and low carbon emission cars. Choose equipment from the Energy Technology List and get 100% tax relief. [www.eca.gov.uk](http://www.eca.gov.uk)

## Water

- **Water Regulation Advisory Scheme.** Advice on water legislation. [www.wras.co.uk](http://www.wras.co.uk)

- **Environment Agency.** Information on water saving and finance for businesses.

[http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/subjects/waterres/286587/287169/951022/?version=1&lang=\\_e](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/subjects/waterres/286587/287169/951022/?version=1&lang=_e)

## Waste Issues

- **Waste Connect.** Factsheets and information on recycling in your area. [www.wasteconnect.co.uk](http://www.wasteconnect.co.uk)
- **WRAP, Waste and Resources Action Programme.** A business development service that offers a 'marriage' service for funders and recycling businesses, and can offer advice and support on business plans, investment proposals and technical issues: [www.wrap.org.uk](http://www.wrap.org.uk)
- **West Wales Eco Centre.** An environmental charity offering free advice on renewable energy, and links to local energy efficiency advice. [www.ecocentre.org.uk](http://www.ecocentre.org.uk)
- **Waste Awareness Wales.** Promoting the 3r's reduce, reuse, recycle. [www.wasteawarenesswales.org.uk/recycling/atwork.html](http://www.wasteawarenesswales.org.uk/recycling/atwork.html)
- **Waste Watch.** Information on waste issues. [www.wastewatch.org.uk](http://www.wastewatch.org.uk) and [www.wasteonline.org.uk](http://www.wasteonline.org.uk)
- **Hazred.** EU funded support for Objective One SMEs in key industry sectors for hazardous waste reduction and resource efficiency [www.hazred.org.uk](http://www.hazred.org.uk)
- **Waste Treatment Technology Network (WTTN).** Practical waste management expertise to businesses in Objective one areas in Wales [www.wastetech.net](http://www.wastetech.net)

## Waste Exchange

- **Plant Parts Ltd.** Construction machinery plant and parts. [www.plant-parts.com](http://www.plant-parts.com)
- **Waste Exchange of the United Kingdom.** Free commercial waste exchange. [www.wastechange.com](http://www.wastechange.com)
- **Building, Research Establishment.** Centre for Waste and Recycling - information for construction industry professionals including waste-exchange and recycled materials. [www.bre.co.uk/service.jsp?id=5](http://www.bre.co.uk/service.jsp?id=5)
- **National Industrial Symbiosis Programme (NISP).** Support for companies in materials and resources exchange. [www.nisp.org.uk](http://www.nisp.org.uk) – **Welsh Regional Programme** [www.map-is.co.uk](http://www.map-is.co.uk)

## Welsh

- **Welsh Language Board.** Advice and information on use of Welsh language and translation. [www.bwrdd-yr-iaith.org.uk](http://www.bwrdd-yr-iaith.org.uk) Short translations can be made free of charge through the Board's LinkLine. The LinkLine is open from 10.00 - 12.30 and from 1.30 - 3.30 from Monday to Friday, and can be contacted by phoning 0845 607 6070, or by e-mail to [cyswilt@bwrdd-yr-iaith.org.uk](mailto:cyswilt@bwrdd-yr-iaith.org.uk). Also grants available for publicity materials up to £1000 <http://www.bwrdd-yr-iaith.org.uk/uploads/publications/324.rtf>
- **Society of Welsh Translators** Bryn Menai, Ffordd Caergybi, Bangor, Gwynedd, LL57 2JA Telephone 01248 371839, fax 01248 371850, email [info@welshtranslators.org.uk](mailto:info@welshtranslators.org.uk). They publish a directory of Welsh translators [www.welshtranslators.org.uk](http://www.welshtranslators.org.uk)

## Work Practices

- **Work Wise UK.** Not-for-profit initiative giving practical guidance and advice on flexible and remote working. Advisors in Wales can be found through [www.workwiseuk.org/index.html](http://www.workwiseuk.org/index.html)



## Appendices

### A1: Declaration of De Minimis aid received



Assistance by the *Synnwyr Busnes – Business Sense* service has been given to your company under the European Commission's De Minimis Regulation (EC Regulation 69/2001). This allows a company to receive up to €200,000 (approximately £134,557.00<sup>1</sup>) of De Minimis aid over a rolling three-year period.

Your company has received three days of assistance from the *Synnwyr Busnes – Business Sense* service to analyse and prepare feedback on the sustainability health-check carried out with you.

For the purpose of recording De Minimis aid received this equates to £1,500.00 (€2,229.52<sup>1</sup>) of assistance or three days at £500 per day. Any De Minimis aid awarded to you as part of the *Synnwyr Busnes – Business Sense* service will be relevant if you wish to apply, or have applied, for any other De Minimis aid.

The onus is on your company to disclose any assistance received as State Aid under the De Minimis Regulation in any three year period. This may have been received in the form of grants, loans or subsidised contracts etc. received from public bodies or other organisations. Assistance received as approved or block exemption State Aid is not cumulated with De Minimis aid when calculating whether the €200,000 threshold has been exceeded. De Minimis aid is only ever cumulated with other De Minimis aid. If you are in any doubt as to whether assistance your company has received has been administered as De Minimis aid, please contact the assisting body for information.

For the purposes of the De Minimis Regulation you must keep this document for three years from the date on this letter and produce it on any request by a public authority or the European Commission. (You may need to keep this letter for longer than three years for other purposes.) Information regarding the full amount of De Minimis aid you have received must be supplied to any other public authority or agency asking for information on De Minimis aid.

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<sup>1</sup> Calculated 2 August 2007 [www.xe.com](http://www.xe.com)

## A2: Background to the health-check

The *Synnwyr Busnes – Business Sense* service arose as a natural development from previous work called *Wales SCEnE* (Sustainable Communities, Environment and Economy) at the University of Wales, Bangor. *Wales SCEnE*'s remit was to produce a best practice guide to sustainability for organisations in Wales.

In order to identify best practice *Wales SCEnE* developed a method by which organisations and companies of any size could assess their contribution towards sustainable development. Twenty-five organisations from a wide variety of private, public, voluntary and community sectors took part in the project to help develop and refine an appraisal questionnaire to measure sustainability in terms of the environment, society, ethics, culture and finances.

In 2006, with funding from the European Union, Welsh Assembly Government and the University of Wales, Bangor, *Synnwyr Busnes – Business Sense* refined and updated the *Wales SCEnE* appraisal methodology to be used as part of its approach to bring sustainable working as good business sense to a wider audience across Wales.

The *Wales SCEnE* project was part of a Welsh Assembly Government initiative known as the TASK programme - Towards A Sustainable Knowledge-based Region, that was carried out in 2002-04 and part funded through the European Regional Development Fund. (For more information see [www.sustainableregions.net](http://www.sustainableregions.net)).

### A3: Interpretation of the radar diagram

First, 'concern after health-check' scores are plotted – the percentage of applicable issues that were of concern to the company **by the end** of the health-check. All issues where the response was either option 3, 4 or 5 contribute to these scores. Fifteen axes, or all those that are applicable, extend from the centre of the diagram, and each score is plotted on the relevant axis. A dark blue 'area' is then created by connecting all the 'Concern after health-check' scores. A 'concern after health-check' score less than 100% indicates that further consideration of the issues covered by the component could be made.

Similarly, a light blue area is plotted, representing the 'concern before health-check' scores – the percentage of applicable issues that were of concern to the company **before** the health-check. All issues where the response was either option 4 or 5 contribute to these scores. Where the light-blue area does not entirely cover the dark-blue, this indicates that the health-check raised issues which are now of concern to the company, although they had not considered them previously.

Finally a green area is plotted, representing the 'Action' score for each component – the percentage of applicable issues where action has been taken (option 5). Only issues where the response was option 5 contribute to this score. Where the green area does not entirely cover the light-blue, this indicates that there are issues which the company has been considering, but has not yet taken action.

The best outcome would be a symmetrical diagram (showing awareness of all issues comprising sustainable development) with high scores for concern and action in all components. The higher the action (green) score, the more successful the company has been in taking action to match its concern. Ideally, the green area should cover the light-blue area completely, indicating that concern has been matched with the relevant action.