

BCC anticipates string of events in 2012 to mark 30th anniversary

The British Cleaning Council has announced that it plans to host an array of events to mark its 30th anniversary, most notably a Parliamentary reception and a commemorative document looking back at the council's history.

The Parliamentary reception, which is sponsored by Lisa Nandy, MP for Wigan, will take place at the Houses of Parliament in March 2012. The event will have the leading figures, from the BCC's past and present, to recognise the BCC's achievements during its thirty years of activity.

Mark Woodhead, Chairman of the British Cleaning Council, said: "We are delighted to be able to host the all those who have played such an important role in creating the BCC and taking it forward over the years. The parliamentary reception will give us a great opportunity to reflect on the councils achievements, while taking a look at our plans for the future. Invitations will be going out shortly; we sincerely hope that everyone who has made a contribution to the BCC over the years will be able to attend."

The British Cleaning Council was founded in 1982, with the aim of providing a coordinated framework for the cleaning industry to promote its aims in the UK and abroad. The BCC co-owns the biennial NEC Cleaning Show and runs an annual industry conference, a unique opportunity for the industry to network and exchange best practice. During 2011, the BCC supported a range of awards and ceremonies, from today's Loo of The Year, the Clean Britain Awards and the Golden Service Awards in London.

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Chairman's Column



Hello and welcome to the first edition of The Voice magazine of 2012. The past twelve months have been a busy and exciting time for all of our members, with several awards programs, new initiatives launched, and some serious intermember networking taking place.

One of the key programs of our autumn months was the grants workshop, where members were invited to come down to London to discuss potential grant ideas with each

other and familiarize themselves with the grant process. Redistributing the funds amongst our members is the raison d'être of the British Cleaning Council, so ensuring that we receive the best and brightest ideas from our members is in the interests of everyone in the cleaning industry. It was a very successful day and we can expect the proposals to start coming in soon, keep checking back to this magazine for further announcements.

Elsewhere in this edition, we bring news of the Loo of the Year Awards, which took place in Warwick in December. The overall winner was Ceredigion County Council, who saw their excellent provision recognised at last. The event was completely sold out and the feedback extremely good, all of which bodes well for the Awards 25th Anniversary event next year. Elsewhere, Asset Skills announced that they have secured £2M in funding to drive employer investment in skills, a huge achievement that will give them the arsenal to continue making progress in the months to come. We have an exclusive report on NHS funding, an update on the Olympics Games and an exclusive interview with Neil Jameson, founding Director of London Citizens. Neil, one of the guest speakers at our annual conference back in October, will be elaborating on why he believes that the Living Wage Campaign is so important to cleaners across the UK.

Enjoy the read.

Mark Woodhead

Ceredigion County Council nets top prize at LOYA

Ceredigion County Council has won the much coveted UK Overall Winners Trophy, only the fourth council to win the Award, in the 24th Anniversary Loo of the Year Awards competition to find the very best 'away from home' toilets in the UK.

Awards managing director, Mike Bone said: "Despite the economic climate which has led to unprecedented public toilet closures, Ceredigion County Council continues to place significant importance on provision of first class toilets that contain the facilities their residents and visitors need and expect when in Ceredigion. Their excellent public toilets, and toilets in schools, and other council buildings, are setting the standard throughout the UK."

Other major UK Trophy Winners were: McDonald's for individual category entries, Carmarthenshire County Council for public toilet entries, JD Wetherspoon for corporate provider entries, Asda Galashiels for accessible facilities, Highland Council for Changing Places Toilets, Tesco Omagh – TC Contractors for baby change facilities, The Phoenix Centre Sandwich for ECO friendly toilets, Highland Council for Toilets in Education and Staffordshire County Council for Local Authority Toilet entries.

Trophy winners in the associated Attendant of the Year Awards, for the very important people who put the sparkle and pride into the UK's toilets, were:

Westminster City Council – Great Portland Street Toilets (individual attendant team), McDonald's (in-house cleaning team) and Asda Stores (external contractor team).



Representatives from the top twenty Local Authorities public toilet providers – the Loo of the Year Awards 'Premier League', were also honoured at the prestigious Awards Presentation Event held on 2nd December at the four star Chesford Grange Hotel in Kenilworth along with thirty one members of the Awards 'Champions League', the Standards of Excellence for participants achieving five or more five star Award grades. Singing and comedy were provided by popular actor, entertainer and comedian Sean Williamson as the after lunch entertainment.

Full details of the 2010 Awards results are available on the Awards website: www.loo.co.uk The 25th anniversary Loo of the Year Awards special Event will be held on 7th December, venue to be confirmed.

Asset Skills secures £2m investment for skills to drive growth

More than £2 million will be spent on projects to drive employer investment in skills across the Asset Skills footprint.

The funding provided through the Employer Investment Fund and administered by the UK Commission for Employment and Skills, will help Asset Skills implement a range of employer-led programmes.

The £2,026,000 will be used across four projects over two years in facilities management, housing, property, planning, cleaning and parking. The projects include; establishing clear routes to employment across the UK with pilots, developing strategies to help employers identify and develop talented people, increasing investment in relevant higher level skills and providing relevant labour market information and careers advice to support employers with their strategic planning.

Chris Cracknell, Chief Executive of OCS Group Limited and Chairman of Asset Skills, the Sector Skills Council for the above industries, said: "We hope this funding can help build further capacity for employers to take ownership of the skills agenda within each industry Asset Skills represents. This investment shows skills improvement will play a key part of the growth agenda and in helping lift industry out of recession."

Richard Beamish, Chief Executive of Asset Skills said: "This is really welcome news for the sector and means we can continue to develop new apprenticeships and work-



specific training that will strengthen the workforce and help employers through this difficult time."

The UK Commission received 109 proposals into the fund totaling over £119m. Following a rigorous assessment process, Commissioners chose 63 of the best solutions with the greatest potential to drive growth and employer investment in skills.

Royal Charter for Industry's London Livery Company

The Worshipful Company of Environmental Cleaners was formally presented with a Royal Charter of Incorporation at their annual Ladies' Banquet on 25th November. The Environmental Cleaners' Company is the 97th Livery Company of the City of London, and is also this year celebrating its 25th Anniversary of receiving Livery from the Corporation of London.

There are currently 108 livery companies in the City, the oldest going back to 1155.

Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Second, upon the advice of her Privy Council, granted a Charter of Incorporation on 21st July 2010. It followed that it was printed on Vellum and prepared for Her Majesty's Royal Signature for passing under the Great Seal. It has since been framed, and was formally presented to the Master, Peter D Holt, by the Windsor Herald of Arms, Mr. William Hunt, at the glittering event held in Drapers' Hall, in the company of some 200 members and guest from the cleaning and support services industry, the military and livery.

The Royal Charter will be displayed at most Company events alongside the Letters Patent, presented some 25 years ago. Most Livery Companies have a Royal Charter, some of them several such charters, granted by sovereigns through the ages!

The Objects for which the Company is constituted are to encourage and foster the craft of Environmental Cleaning and kindred occupations by means of professional and

social intercourse, and the mutual exchange of information between those concerned with that craft and those occupations.

For more information contact Michael Bizley, Clerk Emeritus & Honorary Assistant, Worshipful Company of Environmental



Neil Jameson Interview

During the summer London Citizens targeted Tesco stores across London in response to the supermarkets refusal to pay their staff the London Living Wage of £8.30 an hour.

Peter Carrol asks Neil Jameson, Founding Director of Citizens UK, to explain how the Living Wage campaign has evolved and to give an update on the status on their campaign against Tesco.



Describe the history of the Living Wage Campaign up to the present?

Living Wage was launched in 2001 by London Citizens, following a review of what was happening to families, particularly in East London. The conclusion of our members was that they were not getting richer and they couldn't plan ahead, and it was felt that we needed an alliance to try and protect their income so that they could spend more time with their families.

The campaign is focused on family life, and people having one job instead of two jobs because they are paid enough, so it's a wage on which to live on to bring up your children with. It was a combination of this and the co-operation of major employers, but equally the pressure that we and others have managed put employers under that has meant £17 billion going into the pockets of low wage workers, which affects at least 12,000 families. Professor Jane Willis from Queen Mary University is researching the living wage in detail. This £17 billion has been won through pressure and persuasion on people to do the right thing.

The important thing about these interviews is that more people will get to hear about the aims of the living wage, which since 2004 has been set by the Mayor of London. Ken Livingston was persuaded by a big assembly to take the living wage on; to set it and to pay it, and then to encourage others to do so, and so was Boris Johnson in 2008. But the GLA leads the field in the public sector employment; its £8:30 ph, it's adjusted each year based upon inflation and other statistics by the Mayor's office, and it's a voluntary arrangement.

With inflation running at a three-year high of 5.2%, the living wage is likely to go up by at least 50p at its annual review in April 2012. Do you think there will be a big increase next year? And do you think

this may give Living Wage employers who supply outsourcing to their clients a headache as they try to explain the rise to their clients, most of whom will be cutting back in other areas as the recession endures?

No- 2011's was a big jump, which surprised even us. But it's because of utility bills; this is the problem with taking into consideration a range of statistics. The equation for the living wage is much more realistic than the equation for the minimum wage, because it's concerned with the cost of bringing up children in London. So because utility costs have gone up so much, 25%, the living wage rightly has to go up, because families have to pay their gas, electricity and water bills.

But I honestly can't predict what will happen. It's up to the Mayor's Office, we have nothing to do with the figure. It is transparent and how it is fixed is their business, but it is a different equation to the minimum wage, as it's about family life and all the costs, child care, transport, utility bills, which are required to bring up a family. It's a much more realistic figure.

As the UK faces significant economic challenges, with widespread public sector pay freezes and private sector pay increases averaging only 3%, do you think that those affected by the living wage should be immune from this austerity and have their pay pegged against inflation?

Children still have to be brought up in London, and so that's the pressure, not the pressure on business. We think it's a moral wage, it's a wage which employers should be proud to pay, because it does mean that childcare and all that goes with it is enhanced by families getting this money, which is

coherent with the big society. Our regret, quite frankly, is that the government has failed to take the possibility of leading on the living wage seriously.

In 2010 David Cameron said to a big gathering of our members of citizens UK that the living wage was “an idea whose time has come”. When we asked him if he would build the principle of a living wage into government procurement policies and he said he would consider it, but the government is lagging behind the private sector. The Big Society is only a reality for people who are paid a decent wage and have the time to volunteer and do good. If you are on a minimum wage, you don't have the time or capacity, or the inclination, I guess, to serve the country. So the Big Society is flawed if there is a chunk of people who are not able to have the time because they have to have two jobs.

Are you really surprised by the Conservatives reluctance to embrace the policy? One of the key ideas behind the Big Society is that communities, charities and the private sector will be able to bid for any public service.

By opening up the tendering process in this way, the Conservatives are endorsing a view that the private market can supply services more effectively than the public sector, and this pro-free market view contradicts the regulatory interventionism underpinning the living wage; this is an irreconcilable difference between the two policies, no?

Well the bottom line is, that's why we have governments, and how much people need to live off, we don't take a position on the private sector or the public sector, but we do a position, particularly if its public money, that poverty is not acceptable. So if taxpayers money is going to companies that don't accept a responsibility to pay a living wage, which is meant to protect families and family life, London Citizens will very happily seek a meeting with them to persuade them of the benefits of paying a living wage.

What is your relationship like with the Labour party, are you more confident in their response to the issue of fair pay?

Well we are certainly delighted that all Labour controlled authorities are now taking this seriously, Lewisham, Tower Hamlets, Islington, Ealing, Preston, and Glasgow have all implemented a living wage within their contracts and procurement policies.

Some people have criticised the regionalisation of the Living Wage, that a Londoncentric approach has created different levels of pay in different cities and could lead to greater inequalities and rural poverty.

London Citizens would encourage employers to get in touch with the living wage foundation which we have established which is trying to police this. As far as we are concerned there is only two figures, and that would be our wish of many of the people we are working with either public

and private sector companies; £7.20 outside London and £8.30 in London. That's roughly what has happened, apart from £7.15 in Glasgow. The outside London figure is set by Rowntree Foundation and Loughborough University, where there is a full time unit working on this, and inside London it is set by the Mayor. We don't want the confusion which there is in the States where there are indeed several rates and every city has a different figure.

Just a few words on the larger employers you have targeted for protests. The Tesco's flash mob protests gained you a lot of media coverage over the summer, but they seem to have died down?

I think we have met twice with Tesco's and are having some serious conversations with them about the possibility of them continuing to take the lead as a market leader on issues to do with family life, and therefore the principal of paying the living wage. There is no agreement yet and they are already a good payer within the sector but these are very constructive discussions and we continue to have them.

Our primary quest is to get them and the other market leaders not just to lead on food and production and service, but on wages and this issue of family life too. Practically every major law firm and every major finance company now pays the living wage, and invites people to bid for contracts on the basis of a living wage, that is a big precedent. Our aim is obviously to get all local authorities to do the same, and there is a growing trend amongst Labour authorities that they are doing that.

Has the targeting of Tesco's stopped?

Well no, we'll do them if our members are keen to do them. If there is a company that tells us, basically that pay is none of our business we feel it is 100% our business, because they often employ people who are in our institutions.

The Tesco's protests helped get us the meetings, but now we are having a conversation with them. There is no reason to do any form of demonstration if you are talking to people.



Analysis: Cleaning and NHS Funding in the age of Austerity

Delivering £20bn of efficiency savings was always going to challenge the NHS. But will its cut backs affect the cleaning industry, and will ward hygiene and patient safety be put at risk?

After spending 13 long years out of government, the run up to the 2010 general election saw the Conservative party invest a great deal of time and energy hosting public focus groups, as it searched far and wide for the policies that would propel it back power. One of the themes which emerged from this research was the need to ‘detoxify’ the Conservative brand and for it to become more appealing to independent voters, particularly outside of the south-east of England, where anti-Thatcher sentiments remain and a deep suspicion of Conservative motives is common.

Armed with their market research, the Tories entered the general election campaign season with their manifesto anchored by their cast-iron pledge that they would protect the NHS’s budget whatever the weather, through maintaining healthcare spending in ‘real-terms’ – that is, above the rate of inflation – which meant that the popular national institution was the only part of the public sector that would be protected in this way.

But 18 months after a hung parliament forced the Conservatives into a five year coalition partnership with the Liberal Democrats, the NHS pledge is coming under the twin pressures of anaemic economic growth which is curtailing the Treasury’s tax receipts, while keeping up with the rate of inflation which, at its current five per cent, is the highest it’s been for 14 years.

Early in the parliament health secretary Andrew Lansley announced that the NHS would need to make £20bn of efficiency savings in England by 2015, adding a promise to voters that these savings would not cause the NHS to limit the services it provides.

Instead, he claimed, the money would be saved through reducing bureaucracy, ending waste and adopting innovative ways of working and restructuring services. The key question for the cleaning industry is how much of an effect will these changes have on cleaning budgets, and will this mean that ward hygiene and patient safety is put at risk?

In the past few years, cleaning has played an increasingly prominent role in patient safety, operating on the frontline in the battle against hospital acquired infections (HAI’s)

during the previous Labour government’s £50million deep clean in 2008, and benefitting from the extra resources which were dedicated to drive down infection rates further in the years that followed.

The additional investment in cleaning has undoubtedly driven down HAI rates; figures from the Office for National Statistics revealed that in 2009 MRSA infection rates fell by 35 per cent, with C.diff falling by 29 per cent. Then, in 2010, the number of deaths involving superbugs dropped again in England and Wales, with the mentions of C.diff on death certificates down by 31 per cent to 2,704.

In a period of transition for the NHS, the next set of data on HAI rates will be interesting. But across the country, there are worrying portents that the progress on this issue may stall as budgets tighten.

Earlier this year, the Daily Mirror reported that the NHS is spending £134million less than the minimum required to ensure that wards are kept clear of the MRSA and Clostridium difficile superbugs. Keith Sammonds, of the Health Facilities Consortium, a body which oversees hospital cleaning, publicly warned that the £897million allocated for 2011-12 is 15 per cent below the necessary amount required to keep wards safe.

And up in Scotland, the Labour party has claimed that over 100 cleaning posts have been lost in hospitals during 2011, despite a promise from Scottish National Party health secretary Nicola Sturgeon that they would recruit an extra 600 cleaners in the same period. The figures, acquired after a freedom of information request was submitted six months after the SNP pledge, were disputed by some health authorities, although the SNP has not yet produced any evidence to decisively counter the claim.



Meanwhile, away from the hospital wards, back office staff are also feeling the cuts bite. In Wales, early November 2011 saw media reports that Cardiff and Vale University Health Board told their staff to start cleaning their own offices in an attempt to save money, as offices within the board area are no longer cleaned daily, with bins emptied just once a week as part of the cost-saving measures.

In an email which was leaked to WalesOnline, non-clinical staff working at the health board were told that offices and administrative areas will no longer be cleaned at all, while toilets will be cleaned 'according to how often they are used'. The health board justified the change by

stating that all cleaning services spending should be concentrated on clinical and patient areas across Cardiff and Vale. But it is a clear indication of how much they value cleaning when they have stopped offering a professional service in the staff workplace. And the move becomes even less unsurprising when Cardiff and Vale health board

announced shortly afterwards that it needed to make massive savings of £87.8m – more than five per cent of their total turnover – in 2011.

Crucially, the reports probably emanated from management, and may be the result of self-interest and preservation tactics. The NHS is the third largest employer in the world, operating with a budget of 106bn and employing one in 23 workers in Britain. With any complicated and temperamental organism of this size, the picture around funding will always be contentious, with different groups crying foul when they believe their interests might be threatened.

The true effect of the government's efficiencies will only be known when the HAI statistics for 2011 are released by the ONS in August 2012. While judgement should be reserved until then, it is a matter of grave importance for the patients being treated in Britain's hospitals that safer and cleaner wards remain a sacred goal.

London 2012: Games Makers Update

London 2012 is currently in the process of recruiting around 70,000 volunteers for the Games with some applicants still being interviewed despite there being just eight months to go until the start of the Olympics on July 27. Hackney Community College has been unveiled as the key training location for the London 2012 Games Maker volunteers that will work across the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

However, with some provisional offers already being issued to individuals to become Games Makers and from early next year, successful applicants are preparing to receive orientation, role-specific and venue training.

Most of the Games Makers selected to volunteer during the London 2012 Games will receive their training at either the Shoreditch Campus or Morley Hall on Mare Street at Hackney Community College with sessions to take place from the middle of February to the middle of May 2012.

Olympics authorities have maintained that measures are in place to encourage local recruitment, including apprenticeship opportunities and exclusive early access

to advertised vacancies, and part of the Olympics legacy pledge was that a promise to create 34,000 permanent jobs for the East End, long one of London's most deprived areas.

But recent figures have revealed that of the 44,000 people who have found work on the Olympic Park and Village since 2008, only 8,081 were from the East End – less than 10 per cent, while only 53% have been Londoners.

Meanwhile, only one in four of the apprentices on the Olympic site are from Hackney, which was identified as one of the UK's worst 'unemployment blackspots' in a report by the Trade Union Congress.

Looking ahead, the 70,000 full time staff and Games Maker volunteers will be joined by 100,000 people for in paid employment as Games-time operational services, mainly in catering, cleaning and waste management, security and transport. The paid/unpaid ratio is approximately 60:40 favouring those in paid work.

Additionally, London 2012 has set a target of 15%-20% of their workforce to be residents of the Host Boroughs.



THE VOICE News Round-up

Young Athlete takes top prize from at Young Sports Person Awards

16 year old sprint athlete Sally Brown from Ballykelly has been named the overall winner of the OCS Young Sports Person Awards 2011. Paralympic field athlete Nathan Stephens, who was himself an OCS Young Sports Person Awards winner in 2005, presented Sally with her prize. Speaking of her award, "Sally commented: "Making great achievements in my sport has always been a dream and it's a bit strange now that it's all coming true!"

Winner of the OCS Young Sports Person Awards Disability Category for Ireland, Sally beat off stiff competition from ten regional and three other

Disability Category winners to take the overall winner title for 2011. She will receive £10,000 through the scheme over the next three years.

The 2011 OCS Young Sports Person Awards event in conjunction with SportsAid took place on 24th November at the OCS Stand at the Kia Oval in London, was opened by Chris Cracknell, Chair of Asset Skills, and hosted by leading BBC sports commentator Clare Balding. Young sporting stars from across the UK received their award from sporting personalities including David Gower OBE, Rory Underwood MBE, Kate Howey MBE and Iwan Thomas MBE.

FWC forms strategic alliance with the USA's International Window Cleaning Association

The Federation of Window Cleaners (FWC) is pleased to announce forming a Strategic Alliance with the International Window Cleaning Association (IWCA) based in the USA and the Australian Window Cleaning Federation (AWCF) based in Australia. The immediate goals of this Alliance are: 1) to document and promote accurate technical information related to window/glass cleaning; 2) to develop a written ASTM glass cleaning

Standard to be used worldwide; 3) to establish working relationships with glass fabricators and manufacturers within the international glass industry; and 4) to advance scientific research on the causes of tempered glass scratching and improvements in cleaning methods.

For additional information please visit www.IWCA.org; www.f-w-c.co.uk; or www.awcf.org.au

CIWM Launches Renewables Event alongside RWM Show

Emap has today announced a new content-led B2B exhibition: The Renewables Event. The show explores renewable energy solutions for major end users such as major corporations, manufacturers, retailers and the public sector.

The show will run alongside its two market leading events: The Energy Event and RWM (Resource and Waste Management), taking place on 11th and 12th September 2012 at the Birmingham NEC.

RWM already has a large energy from waste section and this new dedicated

show will link it with the Energy Event to allow visitors the opportunity to see the broadest range of current and future energy technologies. The event will provide education, information and quality networking with solution providers."

The show comes as businesses across the UK aim to reduce energy bills and find low carbon solutions. The UK's Renewable Energy Strategy means that it must generate 15% of energy from renewables by 2020, yet it is currently only achieving around 3%.



BCC Website:
www.britishcleaningcouncil.org
Member websites:

asset skills

www.assetskills.org



www.abcdsp.org

bache

www.bache.org.uk



www.bacsnet.org



www.bics.org.uk



www.britloos.co.uk



www.cieh.org



The Chartered Institution
of Waste Management
www.ciwm.co.uk



www.chsa.co.uk



www.cleaningindustry.org
asset skills

www.keepbritaintidy.org



www.icmma.org.uk



www.keepwalestidy.org



www.nawbw.co.uk



www.ncca.co.uk



www.f-w-c.co.uk



www.ukcpi.org



www.ukha.co.uk



www.environmental-cleaners.com



www.theaga.org.uk